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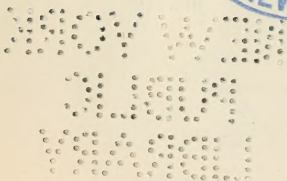
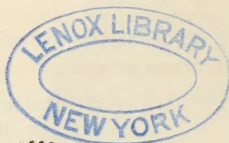
Harsha

(Harsha)

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C. VAN BENTHUYSEN AND SONS,
ALBANY, N. Y.

TO THE MEMORY OF
THE REV. NATHANIEL S. PRIME, D.D., THE REV. ELIPHALET NOTT, D.D., LL.D.,
THE RT. REV. ALONZO POTTER, D.D., LL.D.,*
AND TO ALL WHO LOVE OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST IN SINCERITY,
THE FOLLOWING SONG,
AS A TRIBUTE OF PERSONAL REGARD, IS RESPECTFULLY
INSCRIBED BY THE AUTHOR.

* Præceptores mei clarissimi.

PREFACE.

DURING a period of much debility and pain, the following Song has been written with the design of promoting the glory of the Lord, and the happiness of man. Salvation is its great and important theme. The question, "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" implies salvation is of infinite importance to our present and eternal welfare. For it, Jesus left the regions of glory, and suffered and died in this apostate world. It is God's master-piece of spiritual display, involving the perfections of Deity, the happiness of man, and the eternal halleluiahs of saints and angels. It is THE SCIENCE AND THE SONG OF ALL ETERNITY.

In the following pages, it is discussed on the broad and eternal principles of our most holy religion; and quotations, in prose and in poetry, are made from authors who are now tuning their golden harps in sweeter and nobler strains than were ever heard by mortal ear. It is intended for all classes, conditions and capacities; and we now commend it to God, whose blessing we implore to make it instrumental in bringing many sons and daughters home to mansions in the skies, where they will forever sweetly sing the praises of redeeming love. Oh—

“Thou whom I love, but cannot see,
My Lord, my God! look down on me;
My low affections raise,
The spirit of liberty impart.
Enlarge my soul, inflame my heart,
And while I spread thy praise,
Shine on my path, in mercy shine,
Prosper my work, and make it thine.”

J. W. H.

ARGYLE, N. Y., *October*, 1860.

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THE SONG OF THE REDEEMED.

I.

SALVATION THE THEME OF OUR SONG.

Strike your golden harps—ye seraphs
Join to sing the exalted theme ;
All on earth, and all in heaven,
Join to praise Immanuel's name.
Halleluiah, Halleluiah—
Glory to God and to the Lamb.

IN honor to the Saviour, all Nature bowed before the transcendent glories of his Cross, and all the Hosts of Heaven will celebrate, in one grand concert, his splendid triumph over the Prince of Darkness and his banded legions. Long ago, songs of joy and praise have been sung by the ransomed of the Lord, anticipating the grand concert of eternity. Away, on the lonely shore of the Red Sea, where the pursuing foe lay cold in death, Israel chanted his triumphant song of deliverance, and by the ancient river Kishon, near Mount Tabor, his posterity sung their song of victory over Sisera and his combined forces. When devout men saw the salvation which God had prepared before the face of all people, they sung his praise with

transports of joy, while attending angels shouted, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men." In almost inspired strains, poets had long sung of that golden age, when a new Prince would arise, and the Serpent should die, and war cease, and universal peace would breathe her balmy influence on this apostate world.* But, in a brighter and happier world, where bliss supreme and eternal reigns in every heart, a new song is sung, which none can learn but those who are redeemed from the earth. It is the new song of Redemption, sung in the most exalted strains by all the triumphant hosts of heaven. Its theme is Jesus and his salvation. This was the favorite theme of all the inspired writers—the end of all the legal rites and ceremonies, and the sum and substance of every prophetic song. Oh, what a song of joy and triumph! It involves infinite wisdom, almighty power, everlasting love, endless felicity, and the eternal halleluiahs of men and angels. It is a song of complete deliverance, final triumph and everlasting joy. The angels around the throne on high, listen to it with wonder and admiration. It sounds well in this vale of tears, but it will sound much better in that world where God will wipe away all tears from our eyes. It sounds sweet in anticipation of heaven, but it will sound sweeter far, in the

* Eclogue, 4th.

midst of the Paradise of God. We sing it on earth, to soothe our sorrows on the way to the land of promise, and by Divine favor, we shall sing it in that holy land on the banks of the pure river of water of life. It is a glorious song of triumph, even when sung by all the children of light on earth; but how much more glorious and triumphant will it be, when sung by all the redeemed in heaven! Oh, that all men would now learn with great delight this new song of salvation to God and to the Lamb. It is the *Science and the Song of all Eternity*.

Salvation signifies deliverance from some evil, or enemy. In Theology, it signifies: "The redemption of man from the bondage of sin, and liability to eternal death, and the conferring on him everlasting happiness." It brings deliverance from all moral evil, and confers on him all spiritual and eternal good. The Gospel reveals this salvation in all its excellence, and in language so clear, that none need err therein. In the tender accents of mercy, it earnestly invites the poor, perishing sinner to receive all the blessings of grace, with joy and heart-felt gratitude to God, and assures him that there is no sinner so guilty but he may be forgiven,—none so fallen, but he may be restored—and none so lost and helpless, but he may be recovered and saved with honor and glory in the end. It conveys to our minds the important truth, that this great salvation was contrived by the Father,

procured by the Son, and is applied to our souls by the Holy Sprit of Promise.

Viewed with reference to the soul and eternity, SALVATION IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE. Of all temporal things, man esteems life the most precious and important. He will exert all his powers to save it from the numerous evils which assail it by day and by night. To preserve it from all injuries, which may arise from any cause, is his constant care. To procure the means of subsistence is his constant labor. To repair the injuries it has sustained, and guard against approaching danger, he calls in the aid of others, and freely spends all his living. "All that a man hath will he give for his life." He esteems it a precious boon, on which, so far as human agency is concerned, is suspended his eternal destiny. But when a light from heaven, above the brightness of the noon-day sun, leads him to see the true value of the soul, which must live forever in happiness or in misery, its salvation rises in importance above life itself, and all finite conception. Then a new field of interest and of labor opens up to his view, and he is willing to do and suffer all, to save his soul, and be found in Christ Jesus in that great day when he will pronounce the final doom of men and fallen angels. He sees the storm of divine wrath advancing with the speedy sword of justice, and the voice of God, as on the Mount that burned with fire, ready to break on his devoted head,

and all trembling with fear under a sense of sin and deserved punishment, he cries, Lord, save me, I perish—God be merciful to me, a sinner—What must I do to be saved? Without salvation from sin and woe, I had better never been born. Salvation is now the only thing I desire, and I have not words to tell its value. Compared with its worth, this enchanting world is splendid poverty. I fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in the fire that never shall be quenched. No voice is to me so sweet, so joyful and full of blessing, as that which proclaims salvation through the precious blood of Immanuel. “Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound. They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day, and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.” Blessed be God, that the sound of this salvation has ever reached our ears. Fain would I sound it out so loud that all the world could hear.

Nothing can diminish its importance, nor separate from it our present, our personal and eternal interest. In comparison with it, all earthly pleasures, riches, honor and glory, are only as the shadow to the substance. In its glory, the heavens and the earth lose their lustre. If, in this world of sin and woe, there be any theme which claims our interest above every other, it is salvation. Nothing is of so vast importance. “It is the most precious gift a God of love can bestow;

the greatest work which God Incarnate wrought, and the strongest proof of the grace of the Holy Spirit"; and it should be the most earnest pursuit of our lives. It is the only enterprise in which we can engage without fail from human weakness or reverse of fortune; and yet, alas! how few realize it—how few think of it at all—how many disregard and despise it altogether, and ardently pursue the momentary pleasures of the world, to the utter neglect of their own eternal salvation. May no earthly consideration of gain, honor, power, or pleasure have such influence over our hearts, and cause us to neglect so great salvation; but through riches of free grace, may we experience its divine power and joy in our souls, to console us in life, sustain us in death, and crown us in eternity.

What is so important as our *own salvation*? Can you name any thing within the vast range of thought? Take your stand on the highest pinnacle of the world, and view all the works that are done under the sun, and their glory, and what are they in comparison with our own eternal welfare? What are the schemes of orators and statesmen and heroes—what is the success of armies and commerce, and even the deliverance of a nation from temporary bondage, in comparison with the salvation of an immortal soul from the anguish and horrors of eternal despair! The day is coming when they will be esteemed of no account, even by the devotee of wordly wealth and wordly pleasure, and

the most exalted worldly monarch, who would then fondly give ten thousand worlds for another year, another month, or another day, to obtain an interest in that divine Saviour whom they have slighted.

The eternal happiness or misery to which man is destined, renders the salvation of the soul infinitely important, and its loss equally great and overwhelming. *Eternity! O, Eternity!* who can comprehend the immensity of thy joys or thy sorrows! Is not the very thought of such things sufficient to sound an alarm in the ear of stupidity, and make all men strive mightily to obtain the bliss of heaven, and avoid the torments of eternal fire? How great is the torment of fire for a moment! but what would it be for an hour—a day—an eternity, and no friend to impart consolation—no God to sustain the spirit—nothing to relieve the eye, and not a drop of water to cool the tongue! Who can comprehend the import of the words, *eternal fire—eternal punishment*, or of *life eternal—bliss eternal!* Not one. Then is not salvation all-important to every human being?

SALVATION IS NECESSARY FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE HAPPINESS. Earthly honors and possessions and pleasures can never cause true happiness in the human breast. “Man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.” He may be clothed in purple, and fare sumptuously every day—he may be crowned and titled, and honored and served

by admiring multitudes—the rocks may pour him out rivers of oil—the fields and trees and streams may lend their music to his pleasure, and yet leave an aching void in his soul. The joys that spring from earth do not bring peace to the soul, nor are the splendid crowns which men wear essential to true and lasting felicity; but one thing is needful,

“Which done, the poorest can wants endure,
And which not done, the richest must be poor.”

“Give ear all ye people; hear, all ye inhabitants of the earth, both high and low, rich and poor together”—*the salvation of the soul is the one thing needful*. It is needful for all; from the king on his throne, to the servant that grinds at the mill—for ministers of the Gospel, and for hearers—for the rich, who, without it, are poor in the midst of abundance, and miserable in the midst of pleasures and palaces—for the poor, who are anxious about what they shall eat, or what they shall drink, or wherewithal they shall be clothed—for the old, whose hoary heads will soon be brought to a dishonored grave without it—for the young, who are so gay and thoughtless amid the pursuits and pleasures and vanities of life. It is needful for the whole human race of every age, condition, color and clime. Nothing is so needful.

What is said of wisdom is true of salvation and of religion. “Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore

get wisdom; exalt her, and she shall promote thee; she shall bring thee to honor when thou dost embrace her. She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace; a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee." In the judgment of God, who revealed it,—of the Saviour, who procured it,—and of the Spirit, who applies it—salvation is needful for present peace and future happiness. This is the judgment of the redeemed in heaven, and of the undone in hell; and what perfect folly is in the conduct of those who act as if salvation is the *one thing needless!* Oh, Father in Heaven! look down in pity and in love on such erring mortals; turn them from every evil way, and in mercy reveal to them thy great salvation. It is needful, to sweeten our comforts, and relieve the burdens and sorrows of life, and bring us in triumph over death and the grave, to the unmingled joys and pleasures which are at thy right hand. Without it, the world is worthless and insipid as the fruit which has lost its flavor, the flower its bloom, or the landscape its beauty. Without it, we have no hope beyond the grave, nor anything to obtain God's favor, and must finally be banished from his presence into the dark abodes of endless woe. How overwhelming is the thought of such banishment! From it we instinctively recoil, and grasp for each hope of heaven. But who can have this hope without that religion which is the principal thing; which involves salvation and the whole duty of man, the inter-

ests of society, and the glory of God. In the close of his will the distinguished Patrick Henry says: "I have now disposed of all my property to my family; there is one thing more I wish I could give them, and that is THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION. If they had this, and I had not given them one shilling, they would be rich; and if they had not that, and I gave them all the world, they would be poor." It is the principal thing—the basis of all true greatness in every human character—the source of all true felicity and excellence in both worlds—the sweet bond of peace which unites man with his Creator and with all the children of light. Without it, all on earth will fade and die—all human skill and science—all political eminence and professional fame. Without it, man floats as a worthless atom in the universe, apart from all his proper attractions,—out of the path of all his duties—away, far away from all true happiness, without God and without hope in the world. Oh, that every sinner may now feel the necessity of salvation, and feel the power of religion. Believers in all ages have felt its power—Poets have sung its praise.

“Religion! what treasures untold
Reside in that heavenly word;
More precious than silver and gold,
Or all that this earth can afford.”

Religion,
“The messenger of heavenly love,

The bow of promise in a storm—
Beyond the narrow vale of time,
Where bright celestial ages roll,
To scenes eternal, scenes sublime,
She points the way and leads the soul.”

However little the unrenewed man may desire this salvation, he needs it. He may flatter himself that he is rich and increased in goods, and has need of nothing ; but he knows not his spiritual poverty and misery and constant exposure to divine wrath. O, sinner, do you not need redemption through the blood of Christ ? As sinners condemned to die we need salvation. “The soul that sinneth, it shall die” is the sentence of “Him who can neither deceive, nor change. The sentence will therefore be executed in its strict meaning on all who disobey, and who do not become interested in the redemption of Christ. Under such a sentence infinitely dreadful, and unalterably certain, our danger is immensely great, and our ruin entire. From this sentence, therefore, we infinitely need a deliverance. Our all is at stake, and our souls are in a situation of the most terrible hazard. Hell, if we continue in this situation, is open before us, and destruction has no covering. It is impossible that any beings should be in a state of more absolute and pressing necessity. Rational, immortal, and incapable of perishing by annihilation, we must *be*, and be forever. But to exist forever, and yet to be sinful and

miserable only, is a doom compared with which all other characters and sufferings lose their deformity and wretchedness, and rise into happiness and distinction. Let us never forget our intense and melancholy necessity." Let us ask ruined and wretched sinners—

“ Why will ye lavish out your years,
Amidst a thousand trifling cares ;
Whilst in this various range of thought,
The *one thing needful* you forget.

Why will ye chase the fleeting wind,
And famish an immortal mind ;
While angels with regret look down
To see you spurn a heavenly crown ?

The Eternal God calls from above,
And Jesus pleads his bleeding love ;
Awakened conscience gives you pain,
And shall they join their pleas in vain ?

Not so—your dying eyes shall view
Those objects which you now pursue ;
Not so shall heaven and hell appear,
When the decisive hour is near.

Almighty God, thy power impart
To fix conviction on the heart,
Thy power unveils the blindest eyes
And makes the haughtiest scorner wise.”

SALVATION IS SUITABLE TO OUR WANTS — suitable to all classes, and ages, and conditions, and capacities — to the learned and unlearned; the barbarian, Scythian, bond and free, male and female — the strict moralist,

and the vilest of the vile. It views all, as sinners exposed to divine wrath; and the minor distinctions which prevail among men from parentage, wealth, honor, office, color and clime, are all lost and forgotten in its universal suitability. In this respect it comes to our aid, and freely offers the greatest possible blessings. Do we need cleansing from the guilt and pollution of sin? Here is the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness—the blood which cleanses from all sin, with a perfection matchless and inconceivable. Do we need righteousness for justification and acceptance with God? Jesus is THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, and the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Do we need grace and strength to do the will of our Father in Heaven? He says: “My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” Do we need food and raiment? Here is the best robe, and the best provision freely given to all who desire these favors. Are we poor and needy, without friends and consolation? Here is the gold tried in the fire that we may be rich, and the *Friend that sticketh closer than a brother*. Are we weary and heaven-laden with the burden of sin? Here is rest for the weary. Are we in darkness about the state of our souls? Here is the Sun of Righteousness with his effulgent beams, to dispel all darkness and enlighten our pathway to mansions of endless bliss, and here is the sum of all

perfection and excellence made over in covenant to us, in these endearing words: "I will be a Father unto you and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

As light and everything in nature is adapted to the end for which they were made, so is this salvation adapted to our wants. It is spiritual and so meets our spiritual wants, and has answered the end for which it was designed. The sinner needs present deliverance, and it is brought nigh to him in "The word of Faith which we preach, that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Ro. x: 8, 9. He needs pardon of sin, repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ — grace in time and glory in eternity. Here all is provided, and secured by the covenant, promise, power and faithfulness of Jehovah himself. Here is the living Fountain from which all the streams of present and eternal felicity freely and abundantly flow unto us.

Oh, come fellow sinners, and drink the water of life freely flowing from this pure and living fountain. With transports of joy, and with heart-felt gratitude adore God for the unsearchable riches of his grace — with admiration exclaim, O, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and goodness of God. In the language of prayer and of faith say, I am poor and

needy; but there is in Christ Jesus an infinite fulness for all my wants. God has promised that “the needy shall not always be forgotten; the expectation of the poor shall not perish.” Ps. ix: 18. “When the poor and needy seek water and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys.” Isa: xli: 17. Then, O Lord, supply all my need according to thy riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Wash me in that fountain which is opened for sin and for uncleanness — send me the great Physician with his sovereign balm to heal all my diseases, and clothe me with the garment of salvation. O, let the Spirit of Truth and Holiness rest on me — open the door of thy treasures and give me the unsearchable riches of Christ Jesus. I have heard of thy mercy and the remedy which thou hast provided for the poor perishing and helpless sinner, and I have come to thee for that mercy and that remedy. In all ages thou hast bestowed the riches of thy grace on the poor and needy, without money and without price, and I am encouraged to come to thee for those unsearchable riches. Oh, grant me thy salvation so essential to my happiness — so perfectly adapted to my wants.

SALVATION IS FREE TO ALL MEN, SUSPENDED ON NO CONDITION AS A MERITORIOUS GROUND OF ITS RECEPTION. Even faith is only the instrument of receiving, and

is neither the condition nor the procuring cause of it; for faith is the gift of God—a supernatural grace, and hence cannot be a condition of salvation. It is not granted for ancestry; wealth, works, talents, human merit, external relation to the church, or any such thing—God forgives sin freely and for his own name's sake; and on the same terms grants salvation. The natural man supposes his reformation of life, abundant wealth, or good works will procure salvation for him. But how vain is this supposition! Reformation cannot atone for past offences—good works, and money can never obtain eternal life for man. Though he may give “ten thousands of rivers of oil” or “his first born for his transgression,” or “bestow all his goods to feed the poor, and give his body to be burned,” yet all this avails nothing in the way of *procuring* and *meriting* salvation. It is above all price, and because we have no equivalent to give, God has made it free. He says: “Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price”—“Come take the water of life freely.” Jesus says: “I am the living bread which came down from heaven, if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever; for the bread which I will *give* him is my flesh, which I will *give* for the life of the world.” “If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink.” Such language proves beyond doubt that salvation is freely offered to all, even the chief of sinners without respect to merit or condition in life.

Even the natural gifts of Providence are freely bestowed on a sinful world without respect of persons. The sun shines, and the rain descends freely on the evil and on the good; and how much more is not salvation freely offered to perishing sinners. What equivalent can we render for so great a blessing? Can man be profitable to God as he that is wise may be profitable to himself, or can all created excellence procure salvation? By no means. Our righteousness does not commend us to God, who says: "Ye have sold yourselves for nought, and ye shall be redeemed *without money.*" Is. lii: 3. "I will give to him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life *freely.*"

"How free the fountain flows
Of endless life and joy!
The spring which no confinement knows,
Whose waters never cloy.

How sweet the accents sound
From the Redeemer's tongue!
Assemble all ye nations round
In one obedient throng.

Ho, every thirsty soul
Approach the sacred spring,
Drink, and your fainting spirits cheer,
Renew the draft and sing."

Salvation is free as the fountain—as the air of heaven—as the light of the sun—free to all, the poorest, the vilest. No moral fitness, no money, no price is required to render any sinner welcome to this

unutterable blessing. "It is for sinners as sinners; for the lost as lost; for the wretched as wretched; for the unworthy as unworthy"—for the guilty, polluted and condemned. It is just what we need, and all we need—the *free gift of free grace*. It is for the lost, and such are we. "It is not sold, but given—it is not bartered, but freely conferred—it is not a debt but a favor." It is not procured by works, but received by faith as the gift of God, and we cannot honor him more than by thus receiving it; nor dishonor him more than by neglecting, despising and rejecting it. Oh, may we honor our Divine Redeemer by receiving with joy and gratitude the great salvation which he has procured by his own blood and freely given to a lost and perishing world! How unspeakable the gift! How free and full of the exceeding riches of his grace! It is offered by him whom we may approach with ardor, and without presumption—who holds thrones and sceptres in his hand, and proclaims to the ends of the earth: "Let him that is athirst come, and *whosoever* will, let him take the water of life freely."

Re. xxii: 17.

HIS SALVATION IS COMPLETE. Jesus saves from all sin, and its dire consequences—sins of youth and riper years—sins without number, vile and aggravated to the last degree. Whether known, or unknown, felt, or unfelt, remembered, or forgotten, he has made atonement for them all by his most precious blood,

which cleanses from all sin. It is salvation from all manner of sin—all degree of sin. “All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.” Mt. xii: 31 “All that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.” Jesus has made atonement for the chief of sinners. “This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a *pattern* to them who should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.” 1 Tim. i: 15, 16. The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is excepted, not because there is not an all-sufficiency in the atonement for one guilty of this sin; but because he rejects the only sacrifice for sin, and will not receive the atonement. Jesus saves from all sin, and all enemies of the soul, and presents the Church to God the Father without spot, or blemish, or any such thing. Washed in the fountain which flows from Immanuel’s veins, he sees no stain of sin in her; but she appears to him as the morning, fair as the moon and clear as the sun. This salvation includes deliverance from all moral evil, and the bestowment of all spiritual good.

In Christ Jesus dwells all the fullness of the God-head bodily; and “we are *complete* in him.” Col. ii: 9, 10

“Hence the salvation of one sinner is as complete as that of another, though the former may have lived much longer, and gone far deeper in sin, than the latter. The salvation of Rahab, the harlot, was as complete as that of Joshua, her deliverer; nor would her long life of sin make her peace less perfect or secure than his, though perhaps he had known the Lord from his youth. The salvation of Manasseh, whose sins, both in their own enormity, and by their aggravations, seem absolutely without a parallel, was as complete as that of his godly father, Hezekiah, or his inspired teacher, Isaiah. The salvation of Paul, the blasphemer and persecutor, was not less complete than that of Timothy, who from his youth had sought after God. Nothing but an infinite salvation could have reached the case of such vile transgressors. But when it did reach them, it was complete. It purged their consciences, and cleansed their souls from guilt, even such as theirs. It brought them a perfect, not a partial, or doubtful peace. It gives them as complete an assurance of God’s love, and as sure a consciousness of reconciliation with him, as to those whose past life had been stained with no such outward abominations. It preserved unruffled the steadfast calm of the soul, even in the full remembrance of all the enormities of other days. O, what salvation must this be, that could accomplish all this so perfectly, even for the chief of sinners”! It needs no addition; it is not capable

of any improvement; it is perfect as its Author; it contains pardon, purity, righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, and all the bliss of heaven. It sanctifies and satisfies the believer—satisfies the claims of law and justice — maintains the divine honor and government in saving the sinner *freely, and fully, and forever*. Here mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace embrace each other. Here God appears the just God, and the Saviour. Here are all justice requires, and all the sinner needs. You can think of nothing really good, truly desirable, or worth the attention of an immortal being, but it is included in salvation. Here are life, health, food and raiment, wealth and repose, triumph, and everlasting mansions — all Infinite Wisdom could devise as suited to our natures — all the blood of Christ could procure as adapted to our circumstances — all the loving heart of God could bestow on those whom he loves as he loves his only begotten Son. “Interested in this salvation, no foe shall overcome us; no disaster overwhelm us; no burden prove too heavy for us; no difficulty master us”; — but we shall be more than conquerors through Him that loved us. Oh, may we realize this full salvation, and experience the infinite blessedness of that glorious promise: “He that overcometh, shall inherit all things: I will be his God, and he shall be my son.”

“ O, bless’d Redeemer, fill my soul
 With love and grace divine;
 Subdue the pow’r of ev’ry sin,
 And make me wholly thine.

In thee, O Christ, may I be found,
 From ev’ry blemish free;
 Though vile and worthless in myself,
 Yet all *complete in thee.*”

How happy to say, “ my Beloved is mine and I am his ”;—to be complete in him—to live by faith in him—to be clothed with his righteousness—to dwell under his shadow, and eat his fruit in a land where no wind blows, but the gales of the Holy Spirit—no water flows, but the Water of Life, clear as crystal—no tree grows, but the Tree of Life in the midst of the Paradise of God—and no sun shines, but the Sun of Righteousness. O, my soul, remember this world is not your rest; look beyond it to Immanuel’s land; behold the King in his beauty, and the land that is very far off.

“ O, cease my wandering soul,
 On restless wing to roam;
 All this wide world, to either pole,
 Has not for thee a home.

Behold the Ark of God;
 Behold the open door;
 O, haste to gain that dear abode,
 And rove my soul no more

There safe shalt thou abide,
There sweet shall be thy rest,
And every longing satisfied,
With *full* salvation blessed."

Bless the Lord, O my soul, for his holy word. It gives light in darkness, and a perfect rule of faith and practice for all men and all ages. It offers a complete salvation, and points out the only means by which it can be obtained. It offers a Saviour of infinite perfection and excellence, who is the light of the world and the consolation of Israel, and has redeemed us to God by his blood, out of every kindred and tongue, and people and nation. It provides a complete armor for our spiritual conflict, and exhorts us to put on that armor, especially the shield of Faith, and the helmet of Salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day, and stand entire at last. It assures us a complete victory in the end, and the best blessings in the gift of God. Oh, may we obtain that victory and those blessings through Jesus, the Captain of our Salvation, who has bought them by his own blood for all the children of light.

THIS SALVATION IS EVERLASTING. The salvation of the Lord is for ever—"Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end." Is. xlv: 17. Jesus "has become the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." He has entered into

the holy place having obtained eternal redemption for us. Heb. vi: 9—ix: 12. “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.” Salvation is the fruit of everlasting love. It saves from everlasting evils, and puts us in possession of eternal blessings. It lasts when all created excellence shall fade and die—when the waters shall cease to flow, and the sun and moon, and stars, shall shine no more. Christ’s kingdom shall never be destroyed, but shall stand for ever. “Of his kingdom and government there shall be no end.” His “throne is for ever and ever.” Even so is his salvation, eternal as his throne. When the last struggle is over, and the believer has crossed the swellings of Jordan, or has passed the narrow vale of time, the enemy can never again obtain even a partial victory over him. His salvation can neither change, nor fail. “It is eternally secure; for he who commenced it ever lives to maintain and perpetuate it. He preserves each saved soul by his mighty power, until his coming, that he may present them faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. Nay, their very dust to him is dear; their body as well as their soul he saves, raising it up, and making it like unto his glorious body, that he may place them altogether perfect, completely saved, upon his throne, in the day when he returns to reign—and through eternity these saved ones remain as trophies of a Saviour’s grace and power; an undecaying memorial of the redeeming

love of him, who is able to save to the uttermost. No stain of former sins can reappear upon their spotless raiment; nor can all the infinite abomination of their former ways prevent them from shining in their perfect brightness, as the sons of light—it may be the most resplendent of all! No returning mist of earth can ever again overcast their everlasting sunshine, or cloud the pure azure of their sky. No remembrance of guilt can ever draw one darkening shadow over their brow of light. No consciousness that they are the very sinners who were once in the horrible pit, and in the miry clay, can check their notes of joy, or do aught but add to the gladness, as well as the holiness of the new song which they sing.”

With what transports of joy does a salvation like this fill the heart of a sinner delivered from eternal woe! How does his soul rejoice to know that it is everlasting, and that its perpetuity does not depend on any created power, or excellence, or it would fail; but on the Lord, our Righteousness, and resting on this foundation, it is stable and eternal as the throne of God. All else is unstable as water, but this will outlive death and the judgment, survive the wreck of matter, and remain co-existent with eternity. O, unspeakable blessing! unparalleled mercy! “A salvation changeless as the nature of God, lasting as the perfections of Deity, endless as the day of eternity.”

This is the nature of that salvation which is revealed

in the Gospel, and freely and fully offered to us, and may we by faith receive, and appropriate it to our own souls. It is sent to us from God himself; in mercy, and in love, and in all sincerity. It has been long sent to a lost world, and affectionately urged. O, Lord, send it home to our hearts in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power; and it shall not return unto thee void. May we ever rejoice in thy word, which brings songs of deliverance to our souls; may it be better to us than many thousands, and great sums of gold and silver—our comfort in affliction, our solace in life and our support in death; and since it brings and offers us free, full and eternal salvation, bought by the precious blood of Immanuel, may it be written on the tables of our hearts, and be as frontlets between our eyes. Others vile as we have obtained salvation, through the infinite merits of the Lord Jesus Christ, who declares in his word: “Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out,” and thus assures us that if we seek, we shall find rest to our souls. Then let us earnestly seek this precious salvation, and let us consider its vast importance—its absolute necessity to our happiness—its entire suitability to our wants—its perfect freeness—its overflowing fulness—its eternal duration.

This precious word brings deliverance to rebels against their Saviour, and their God—songs of deliverance from ruin supreme, and endless. It brings deliverance to those that were destitute and helpless,

forsaken and friendless. It restores to the divine favor and fellowship those who hated God, and their own souls, and loved death. It inspires with hope those who had no hope, nor place of rest for their souls. It comes from God, their Saviour, from Heaven, the place of hope, and peace, and joy. It promises renewed holiness to men given over to endless sin; peace and reconciliation and eternal life to men doomed to die forever. It proclaims the easiest terms and means by which life eternal can be obtained, and presents the most alluring motives to its attainment. It is sent to a world in ruins, and proclaims its restoration to hope and happiness. It conveys the richest blessings in the gift of God to a lost world. The Saviour it offers is the Saviour of men, and every one who hears this blessed word may exclaim, this is my Redeemer: who came into this world of sin and woe for my deliverance — became incarnate — lived and died, and rose again, and ascended with shouts of triumph to the right hand of the Majesty on high, before whom he ever liveth to make intercession for us.

Blessed Saviour, shine on thy word and illuminate our dark minds by thy divine effulgence; remove the veil from our hearts, and let us behold thy glory with unveiled face, and by experience know the infinite blessedness of thy salvation. Remove from our hearts all darkness, all unbelief, and all sin, and let divine light shine in our souls. Let thy Spirit be in us a

well of living water, springing up into everlasting life; make us holy, and then we shall be happy; within all will be glorious and serene, and the sweet foretaste of eternal rest. Without thyself, dwelling in our hearts by faith and love, nothing can satisfy our longing souls. Oh, for faith to receive the Lord Jesus in all his fullness and excellence as our Saviour. Come, Lord Jesus, with all thy full salvation to our souls that we may be eternally saved, and never confounded world without end, and when time shall be no more, may we unite with the redeemed around the throne on high in celebrating thy praise through all eternity.

Then will that great salvation which thou hast procured by thy infinitely precious blood, and freely offered in the Gospel to perishing sinners, appear of more value than all worlds. May all men see its value now—

“ And why do our admiring eyes

These Gospel-glories see?

And whence doth every heart reply

Salvation sent to me!

In fatal shades of midnight gloom

Ten thousand wretches stray;

And Satan blinds ten thousand more

Amidst the blaze of day.

Millions of raging souls beneath,

In endless anguish hear

Harmonious sounds of grace transformed

To echoes of despair.

And dost thou, Lord, subdue my heart,
And show my sins forgiven,
And bear thy witness to my part
Amongst the heirs of Heaven?

As the redeemed of the Lord,
We sing the Saviour's name,
And while the long salvation lasts,
Its sovereign grace proclaim."

3*

II.

THE GREAT SALVATION.

“Reveal thy great salvation, Lord,
Dispel each rising doubt ;
Oh ! speak that soul-enliv’ning word,
‘Thy sins are blotted out.’

Then shall I raise the cheerful song,
To my redeeming God ;
And join the raptured choral throng
In Zion’s blest abode.”

EVERY blessing which comes from above and leads to God, may well be called great. He is the sum of all perfection and excellence. His greatness is unsearchable, and he does great things past finding out ; yea, and wonders without number. His greatness, wisdom and goodness are wondrously displayed in creation and providence, but salvation is the master-piece of his love and mercy to fallen man. Eternity itself is required for its full development. It is great beyond description — beyond comparison and conception. It includes every blessing necessary for our spiritual and eternal welfare. It contains more than time can unfold and eternity exhaust. Through all eternity redeemed sinners will continue to investigate the great salvation

of the soul, while admiring angels, around the throne on high, like the Cherubim over the mercy-seat, will continue to look into this most bright display of divine love to fallen man.

SALVATION IS GREAT IN ITS CONTRIVANCE. It exceeds all finite wisdom; for, with all the advantages of human science, man has never been able to devise a plan of salvation adequate to his wants. “The world by wisdom knew not God” — had no true knowledge of his perfections and excellence, nor of the way of salvation by Jesus Christ. Not a prayer ascended from their altars as sweet incense to the Most High. Not a ray of heaven’s own light shone to dispel the surrounding gloom. No friendly shelter was found, to which the guilty might flee from the storm and tempest. Above, around, beneath, was darkness all, until this plan was revealed. They looked for light, but behold obscurity — for peace, and behold trouble came. Then the honor of this plan belongs to God alone whose arm brought salvation. None but He could devise it. No love and no power less than divine could provide the infinite expense; nor accomplish the work; nor apply its untold and inexhaustible blessings to our souls.

It flows from God’s great and everlasting love. It maintains his honor and government, and displays all his perfections. In it the perfections of Deity harmonize, and shine with transcendent lustre. Here

they have received a new and nobler development than in all the works of creation and providence. All the perfections of the Godhead are engaged in this great and glorious work. It involves the great mercy of the Father, the great merit of the Son, and the great love of the Spirit. What does it not involve? Jesus and his salvation are the ultimate end for which the universe was made. "By him all things were created — created by him and *for him*." Col. i: 16. For him explains the moral purpose for which the universe in all its excellence and glory was made, and proves salvation to be great, since the universe is only "a theatre designed by God for the manifestation of its glories. All nature is a constitution designed to illustrate its majesty and meaning." All providence is subservient to its application. All its developments in the history of nations and individuals tend to enthrone the Saviour — all religion is a means of exhibiting the salvation of the Church; and may we, from our inmost souls, echo "the ever-deepening chant of those enraptured saints who, when they gaze downward into the abyss of its glory, retreat into adoration and cry — 'O, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!'"

God is great above all thoughts of men and angels. He fills heaven and earth; and all nations before him are as nothing. So also his salvation is great; and it

derives an essential and everlasting greatness, not only from the Ransom of sinners, but also, and especially, from its reflex bearings on the infinite perfections of God, from whom it originated. He who rejects salvation, repels from his undone spirit the whole Godhead, and there remains for him no more sacrifice for sin. He rejects something "so stupendous in principle, and so unutterable in consequence, that nothing equal to the great salvation can have dignity for its origin, or eternity for its result." Redeeming love, as displayed in the gift of Jesus Christ, is mercy infinite. "To creatures so polluted, guilty, and atheistic as we all are by nature, every object which does not blast our senses in creation — every visitation which does not overwhelm us in providence — and every ray of comfort which glimmers forth from the faintest discovery of pardon in Scripture, is indeed a mercy. In fact, we are within the bounds of sobriety when we assert, that not to be in the burning pit, with the worm of fire gnawing at our souls, is mercy. But the great salvation surpasses all this. It is Jehovah's master-piece of spiritual display. It is the crowning wonder-work of the Triune Almighty, from which the future eternity of saints and seraphim will derive a prevailing tone and presiding character." How infinitely great is the love of Him who veiled his uncreated glory in humanity, for our redemption! "We may tax the riches of the universe to supply us with

illustrations, and levy a contribution on all the inconceivable glories of both matter and mind, to shadow forth the inconceivable claims of the Redeemer"; and "Yet are we still at an infinite distance from the essential grandeurs of the Cross. It is enough for us to feel and believe, that in the salvation of sinners, the deeps of divine compassion are laid open to their lowest extremity; and men and angels are invited to gather round the sacred abyss, and cry, with swells of extatic praise, 'O the depth! O the depth!'"—(*Montgomery.*) What is the sum of the unutterable display of divine love? Is it not expressed by these words? "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." The love of God is most clearly manifested to a lost world in the unspeakable gift of his only-begotten Son. In this gift, so amazing and divine, every other blessing is included; for "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things"? "Christ is a gift of such amazing grandeur, that after that donation, all things, both in heaven and earth, are as a mere supplement, which remains; nay, our eternity itself, instinct as it will be with perfect light and purest love, shall constitute nothing more than an item, when compared with that Redeemer who

is '*the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.*'" But alas ! the great sin of thousands, " who constitute the amiable, the respectable, and accomplished movers of our social world," is to make light of Christ, and the great salvation which involves in its principles the glorious perfections of Deity and the everlasting felicity of man. Salvation by Jesus Christ is a manifestation of God without a parallel, and though desirous to comprehend it, even the angels around his throne are not able. By this divine plan the manifold wisdom of God is displayed. Justice is satisfied—mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace embrace each other—peace on earth and good will to man are proclaimed—sin and Satan are vanquished, God glorified, and man saved. How full of divine wisdom and love is this glorious plan of salvation ! what riches of divine grace does it contain ! what depths of divine love ! how great, and glorious, and adequate to our wants !

" Salvation ! what a glorious plan ;
How suited to our need !
The grace that raises fallen man,
Is wonderful indeed.

True wisdom formed the vast design,
To ransom us when lost ;
And love's unfathomable mine
Provided all the cost.

Truth, Wisdom, Justice, Power and Love,
In all their glory shone,
When Jesus left the courts above,
And died to save his own."

SALVATION IS GREAT IN ITS ACCOMPLISHMENT. How infinitely great is the work of redeeming a lost world! Is it not far above and beyond all created power? Who could maintain the honor of God's moral government, satisfy his law and justice, make atonement for sin, renew the soul, and deliver man from the bondage of sin and liability to eternal death, and confer on him everlasting life? Is this in the power of men and angels? or does it not belong to Him who rules the entire world, and guides its motions, from the brightest star that glitters in the azure firmament, to the smallest atom which floats in the air unseen? He alone could pay the infinite price of our redemption, and restore us to the divine favor, by making atonement for sin, and thus satisfying the claims of law and justice. The awful penalty for sin is death in all its extent. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," is the dreadful sentence pronounced by Him who can neither deceive nor change. Then sinful man must die, unless for him a ransom is found.

"He, with his whole posterity must die;
Die he, or Justice must, unless for him
Some other, able and as willing, pay
The rigid satisfaction, death for death."

But where can this ransom be found ?

“ Say, heavenly powers, where shall we find such love ?

Which of you will be mortal, to redeem

Man’s mortal crime ? and die the dead to save ?

He asked : but all the heavenly choir stood mute,

And silence was in heaven.”

This love is found in the Saviour, who died for the redemption of man. For this purpose he assumed human nature in union with the divine ; and amidst all the reproaches cast on poverty, and the obloquy of his humble birth, he lived a most laborious and useful life, consecrated to the glory of God and the good of mankind. He suffered all the evil which wicked men in league with Satan could contrive and inflict, and suffered in his soul the wrath of God due for sin — poured out his soul unto death — purchased the Church with his own blood, and became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. Though heir of all things, “ yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” “ Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God ; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men ; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” Phil. ii : 6—8. What astonishing humiliation ! what infinite condescension ! what unparalleled love is dis-

played in the salvation of man! In the creation of the world God said, "Let there be light, and there was light"; but to redeem and save man, his only-begotten Son must leave his bosom, assume our nature, and suffer and die in our room and stead. "While we were yet sinners Christ died for us." At the awful scenes of his death, the heart of his disciples was filled with extreme sorrow, and his enemies, in the midst of their triumph, were astonished and confounded. All nature put on the habiliments of mourning — darkness was over the earth from the sixth to the ninth hour — the veil of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom, and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent, and the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose. The mob that came with insults and mockery, returned home smiting their breasts. The centurion, in profound astonishment, exclaimed: "Truly, this was the Son of God!" and a distant philosopher, seeing that total eclipse without any natural cause, said: "Either the God of Nature suffered, or Nature was about to expire." Wonderful to tell! the God of Nature suffered and died that we might live!

"Messiah, Prince of Peace, Eternal King,
Died that the dead might live, the lost be saved.
Wonder, O heavens! be astonished, earth!
Thou ancient, thou forgotten earth! ye worlds admire!"

The means by which salvation was accomplished evince its greatness. In it are involved the incarnation, sufferings and death, resurrection and ascension of the Saviour. "Majesty, mystery and mercy here are concentrated, in order to realize results which have Divinity for their origin, and demand eternity for their full expansion." The greatness of salvation shines in the transcendent excellence of Him who died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins. "It is this which invests the entire work of salvation with an overwhelming grandeur that leaves all language far behind, when it tries to overtake its glory." He who became incarnate, and expired on the cross for our redemption, was the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. The incarnation of Jesus Christ is the rock on which our great salvation rests. The person of Christ was the priest, altar and sacrifice by which atonement was made for sin. Jesus is the sum and substance of Revelation, and the source of all our hopes in time and glories in eternity. Great, therefore, is our salvation, because his divine blood and infinite pangs were alone competent to procure it. Even in heaven, "where you might have imagined no remembrance of sin or suffering would have remained, Calvary and its Victim are mementos and admonitions of God in his mercy and Christ in his agony." "In the midst of the elders stood a Lamb as it had been slain" — "the four-and-twenty elders fell down before

the Lamb, having every one of them, harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints; and they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the Book and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." REV. V: 8, 9. How great is our salvation, when it thus employs the inhabitants of heaven! But we have now only a glimpse of the glory beaming from the Cross. The sacrifice of Christ transcends all we can see in the mysteries of providence and of grace. Creation bowed under its completion, and did homage to the Son of God when he bore our sins in his own body on the tree.

All this is true of the resurrection and ascension of the Saviour. In his resurrection we realize our future triumph over the grave, and in its grandeur see the greatness of our salvation. Jesus says: "I am the Resurrection and the Life": "I am he that was dead and is alive forevermore": "Because I live, ye shall live also." He has ascended far above all heavens, and placed human nature, in his own glorious person, under the canopy of God's everlasting love. Then, amidst all our clouds, and difficulties on earth, may we be drawn to that place which Jesus, in the greatness of his love, has prepared for us; and may we feel the living connexion which exists between "a glorified Saviour in Heaven and a believing disciple on earth." If Christ had not ascended far above

all principalities and powers, the Church would long ago have been destroyed. But by his almighty power it has been preserved amidst all opposition whatever. "Within has it been corrupted: without has it been persecuted: every weapon which Satanic guilt could forge, and every species of warfare which human dislike or intolerance could adopt, have in their turn assailed the mystical body of Christ below. But thanks be to God who gives us the victory! Neither the craft of hell, nor the cruelty of earth has prevailed. There is a divinity in that promise, 'Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world,' which nothing has been able to resist or control."

Jesus exercises supreme power over all things, visible and invisible, for the redemption, the purity, the preservation and final glory of the Church which he has purchased with his own blood. He died, the dead to save. "When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." Ro. v: 6.

"*Redemption!* O thou beauteous, mystic plan!
 Thou salutary source of light to man!
 What tongue can speak thy comprehensive grace?
 What thought thy depths unfathomable trace?"

When lost in sin our ruined nature lay,
 When awful Justice claimed her righteous pay,
 See the mild Saviour bend his pitying eye,
 And stop the lightning just prepared to fly!"

SALVATION IS GREAT IN ITS APPLICATION. It is the peculiar work of the Holy Spirit to apply redemption to our souls. Until he opens our eyes to behold the wondrous things out of the law, all is darkness. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Co. ii: 14. But when this Divine agent enlightens our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renews our wills, Revelation pours its vast discoveries and beauties into our souls. He works in us both to *will* and to *do* his divine pleasure. It enhances the greatness of salvation, when we remember there is a divine Spirit dwelling in us, bearing witness and testifying through the organ of conscience, that there is no "other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," than the name Jesus — neither is there salvation in any other.

It is difficult to explain the mode by which this Divine agent operates on our minds. But as mind acts on mind, so does the Spirit of the Lord act on our spirits. Unless He dwells in us we have no part nor lot in the inheritance of heaven. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, and woe be to man when the Spirit ceases to strive with him. It is his office to reveal the glories of redemption, and to convince the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment. Jn. xvi: 8. "Oh, let us beware how we

tamper with conscience, trifle with grace, and turn a deaf ear to the secret whispers of that *Almighty minister* who preaches on eternity and divinity to man within ! Who can tell, in this respect, how often he offends ? The Spirit is a free, sovereign, mysterious and illimitable agent in the kingdom of grace. No time excludes him ; no circumstance resists him ; no scene escapes him ; everywhere, at all times and at all places may this blessed reprover, comforter, teacher and guide be busy at our hearts, and amid the scenery of inward consciousness enact his works of light and love. If salvation be great because it was an eternal conception of the Father, and a mysterious procurement of the Son, not less great is it when we recollect the application of this salvation officially pertains unto the Infinite Spirit." May the love and power and presence of the Spirit have a more prominent place in our creed and conduct than they often have. Jesus says : " He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you." Jn. xvi : 14. Then, without his manifestation, the light that is in us will be darkness. His agency is no less essential to our salvation than the work of the Son, because He alone applies it. " Without him the Church would be an ecclesiastical corpse, the Bible a dead letter, the sacraments mere ceremonial impostures, and our entire religion would be an outward unreality, with a name to live and nothing more."

SALVATION IS GREAT IN RESPECT OF THE GOSPEL WHICH REVEALS IT. The Gospel is a revelation of the grace of God to fallen man through a Mediator. It literally signifies good news or glad tidings, and is called the *Gospel of the grace of God, and the power of God unto salvation*, to every one that believeth. It is the rod of God's great power which goes forth out of Zion and makes him a willing people. It makes the wilderness and solitary place glad, and the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose. It is "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Cor. x: 4, 5. Under its benign influence "the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; they shall not hurt, nor destroy in all his holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." Is. xi: 6-9. It excites and cherishes all the sweet and tender sympathies of life, and inculcates a spirit of forgiveness and love to all, even our enemies who despitefully use and persecute us. It turns war into peace, and will yet make the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. Before its converting and saving power, the reign of Pagan idolatry has passed away, and Satan's kingdom tottered to its centre.

In the introduction of the Christian religion, when every other system of worship was arrayed against it, the power of the Gospel was everywhere felt. Then Tertullian said to the Roman emperor: "We are of yesterday, and we have filled every place—your cities, garrison and free towns; your camp, senate and forum—we have left nothing empty but your temples." What has since hindered the blessed Gospel from filling the world, and making it like the garden of the Lord? Is it not that selfish, worldly and avaricious spirit, which everywhere prevails, and destroys the vitality of pure and undefiled religion? "Covetousness is the ruling spirit of the world, and the prevailing spirit of the Church." "The love of money is the root of all evil." It sways all classes, not excepting the Throne and the Altar. This spirit has hindered the support and extension of the Gospel, and the conversion of the world: but even it is doomed to yield to that glorious Gospel which is the power of God unto salvation. May we all feel its power in transforming us into the image of God's dear Son, and in bringing us into the glorious liberty of his children. How great is its power, and "how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation." *Is. lli : 7*

“ Hark ! ’tis the prophet of the skies
Proclaims *redemption* near ;
The night of death and bondage flies,
The dawning tints appear.

Zion, from deepest shades of gloom,
Awakes to glorious day ;
Her desert-wastes with verdure bloom,
Her shadows flee away.

To heal her wounds, her night dispel,
Her heralds cross the main ;
On Calvary’s awful brow they tell,
That Jesus lives again.

Glorious Gospel of the blessed God, “ whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature.” 2 Pt. i: 4 Like so many stars of comfort, lighted by the Sun of Righteousness, who is the centre of all excellence that shines on the souls of believers, they irradiate the entire Bible. They are great and precious, “ because they expand their reach over all the persons and attributes of Divinity ; over all the interests of humanity in time, and over all the consciousness of man in eternity.” They are precious as centered in Christ Jesus, in whom they are all yea and amen, and as partaking of the purity, sympathy and compassion of their Root and Origin. “ To say nothing of the precious glories and privileges which they convey in principle to the soul in its eternal state

what riches of comfort do they impart to the life that now is ! Not a tear of anguish, but a promise is ready to disperse it : not a trial which it cannot soothe, a temptation it cannot subdue : not a grief it cannot allay : not a wound in the heart, or a weakness in the spirit, which it cannot also help to staunch and overcome." They render salvation great, and show that all the holiness and happiness of man in time and eternity, displayed in the work of salvation, is to the praise of the glory of divine grace. This simple declaration involves themes of grandeur, importance, and truth, which transcend all human description. It contains breadth and length, depth and height, which surpass all finite knowledge and conception. It displays the love of God ; the person, work, offices and character of the Saviour ; the perfections of the Divine nature ; the purity and perfections of the Lamb of God ; the design of creation ; the divine mercy and justice ; and the work and office of the Spirit. Salvation therefore is great, and " around it shall ring the hosannas of angels and the halleluiahs of saints forever."

The great and glorious object of all true religion is to restore man to a state of blessed communion with his offended Maker ; and while false religion has only deceived, the religion of Jesus Christ " has alone bestowed on the tortured conscience a divine relief, and on the wearied heart an eternal rest. What have been

the rivals which political genius, educational culture, and social refinement have set up against the Gospel, but proud attempts to achieve that freedom which the Son only can bestow?" Human nature cannot be really great and good till it becomes truly free; and never can spiritual liberty be attained except by the justifying merit and sanctifying operation of Him who makes free indeed. Salvation is therefore great, because it makes us free, and gives us a title and fitness for heaven; and because the "moral transition it effects in us calls into action all the merciful greatness which exists in God." This sublime truth is revealed in the Bible, "which is an intellectual sun whose beams are inspired words; in the power and play of whose spiritual life and lustre all the doctrines of salvation may be said to live and move and have their being." How rich and numerous are its blessings!

"How rich, how varied are the themes
The sacred page contains;
Like oceans deep, or lucid streams
That fertilize the plains.

Here humble souls are sweetly taught
Salvation through *His* blood;
By whom alone mankind are brought
To happiness and God."

SALVATION IS GREAT AS TO THE WITNESS AND SANCTIONS WHICH CONFIRM IT. The word "began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by

them that heard him ; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with diverse miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will." How faithful and true and infallible is this witness ! It points us with unerring certainty to the signs and wonders of Egypt, of the Red Sea, and of Jordan — to the bush burning, yet unconsumed — to the manna from heaven, emblem of the bread of life given to a lost world — to the smitten rock pouring forth living streams in the burning desert — to the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night, to guide in peace and safety the weary pilgrim to the land of promise — to Korah and his company, sinking under the vengeance of heaven — to the overthrow of Jericho, and the destruction of Senachrib's army by the Angel of the Lord — to the sun arrested in his course — to the preservation of Daniel from the lion's den and from the fiery furnace — to the dead raised both in Old and New Testament times — to the multitudes fed by a few loaves and fishes — to the leper, the lame, the deaf and dumb, and to all manner of disease healed by a touch or a word — to the raging sea hushed into a calm by the gentle words, "Peace, be still" — to the Prince of the Power of the Air, and the unclean spirits cast out — and to the disciples speaking with unknown tongues. Men were eye-witnesses of these things, and of the resurrection and ascension of the Saviour, and many other signs and wonders which

God wrought to confirm the great salvation. Now, if you receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater ; and if you will not receive this evidence, will you be persuaded though one rose from the dead ? This witness and these sanctions are transcendent and infinite. Divine justice will be displayed in punishing the guilty sinner who neglects so great salvation in the face of such convincing evidence. “As the glory of the Cross is reflected over the entire scenery of Scripture, so is the shadow of the Judgment Throne seen to hover above the same with its glory and grandeur. The moral effulgence which streams from the atonement, not only illuminates the mansions of glory in heaven, but also discovers the dark depths of despair in hell. There is an immortality to be endured in hell, as well as an immortality to be enjoyed in heaven by all who wash their hearts white in his atoning blood. How great must that salvation be, whose repulsed mercies and neglected privileges are followed by the worm that never dies, and the fire that is never quenched ! The glories of heaven do not shine forth with more vivid reality from the promise of the Gospel, than do the agonies of hell loom out from the threats of the same with terrible distinctness.” On the neglect of salvation follows the certainty of a ruin as appalling in the immensity of its endurance, as the salvation itself is glorious in the everlasting rescue which it implies.

SALVATION IS GREAT AS TO THE EVIL FROM WHICH IT DELIVERS US. This deliverance does not include the common evils of life, as pain, disease, persecution and death, and “slander worse than mockery, or sword, or death, standing nightly by her horrid forge, fabricating lies to stain our name and wound our peace ;” but it includes the great *evil of sin*. What tongue can tell, or pen describe this evil, which spreads ruin over the face of nature and over the souls of men ? What power less than Divine can subdue it ? When it gains dominion over man, everything bends to its power and contributes to its pleasure. Treasures of fine gold are squandered — many strong men are slain — the sweet endearments of life, the voice of conscience, and the joys of heaven are surrendered to its constant demands. By fair pretence, it deceives both young and old, in every station of life. It assumes false titles, asserts false claims, offers false excuses and makes false resolutions — claims to do evil from antiquity and custom, from the prevalence of its influence and from the sanctions it receives from society. It pleads for the present — pleads the ease and readiness of future amendment — determines only to make a few experiments in evil, and then walk in the way of holiness and peace. It claims the present, and gives the uncertain future to better things — puts off repentance and religion till to-morrow, and thus deceives man ; but its sure *reward is vexation, disappointment and remorse*.

“Sin has a thousand treacherous arts
To practice on the mind ;
With flattering looks she tempts our hearts,
But leaves a sting behind.

‘With names of virtue she deceives
The aged and the young ;
And while the heedless wretch believes,
She makes his fetters strong.

“She pleads for all the joys she brings,
And gives a fair pretence ;
But cheats the soul of heavenly things,
And chains it down to sense.

“So on a tree divinely fair,
Grew the forbidden food ;
Our mother took the poison there,
And tainted all her blood.”

It defiles the whole man, deprives him of communion with God, and destroys his soul. By its polluting touch, all Nature fades as a leaf of the forest or a flower of the field. It brings dishonor and reproach that shall not be wiped away, hardens the heart, and when finished brings forth death.

“What havoc hast thou made foul monster *sin* !
Greatest and first of ills ! the fruitful parent
Of woes of all dimensions ! But for thee,
Sorrow had never been !”

No power of men and angels can remove sin. Human reason, learning, legislation and systems of

religion have all tried, in vain, to restore one sin-smitten soul to life and health. God alone can deliver and save the soul. What ruin has it spread through the entire world! It cast the fallen angels down from the abodes of bliss to those of darkness and despair — divested man of the Divine image, impaired all his faculties and deprived him of blessings innumerable, both of a temporal and spiritual nature, and brought on him and his posterity a train of positive evils, without number and without end. The moment he sinned, his happiness fled like the morning cloud and early dew — the seeds of mortality were sown in his constitution, and he was doomed to decline in vigor and activity — to feel the infirmities of old age, and at last sink into the grave. His mind was disturbed with fear, anxiety, regret and remorse, hitherto unknown, and “the awful prospect of the termination of his earthly career, aggravated the other evils which he suffered, and embittered his remaining pleasures.” His hopes of happiness for him and his posterity were lost. Sin shed its baneful influence over his soul, and in a moment turned its beauty into deformity. The image of God was lost, and the tie which bound him to his Creator, and inspired and sustained his moral excellence, withered and died like the leaves of autumn. “Nothing remained but his natural faculties, weakened and corrupted — a darkened understanding — a wayward will — sensual appetites and irregular affections.

The change was sudden, but it was complete. Human nature was essentially the same, but it was divested of its brightest ornaments." Sin has ever since been making havoc of mankind, and sending one generation after another into the grave. It has multiplied crimes and miseries from age to age, and doomed myriads of beings, capable of immortal felicity and endless improvement, to spend an interminable existence in sorrow and despair. View this evil in the common afflictions and crosses of the world—in the gloom of the grave—in the torments of an awakened conscience—in separation from God, the sole Fountain of all good, and in the first great sin which brought down the curse of Jehovah on all generations and ruined the world. View it in the sufferings of the Saviour, when he endured the wrath of God, due for sin, and view it in the torments of that fire which shall never be quenched. The lost must endure the wrath of God and of the Lamb, without mitigation, without mixture, without mercy and without end. It is the wrath of abused mercies, and despised patience and forbearance. It has been accumulated by the sinner, and treasured up against the day of wrath; and after it has been borne ages without number, it will still be wrath to come. All this is the bitter fruit of sin.

“ O, cursed, cursed sin! traitor to God,
And ruiner of man! mother of woe,
And death and hell!”

Then how infinitely great is that salvation which brings deliverance from such evil, and confers on us everlasting bliss ! Oh, that we may obtain this deliverance and this bliss, through the infinite merits of our divine Redeemer, and ascribe all the honor and praise to his great name.

SALVATION IS GREAT IN RESPECT OF THE BLESSINGS IT PROCURES FOR US. They are exceeding great and precious, involving the perfections of Deity, the holiness and happiness of man, and the eternal halleluiahs of men and angels. Salvation brings deliverance from the kingdom of Satan, and translates us into the kingdom of God's dear Son ; makes us members of God's family — heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. The language of the Covenant is : "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." "I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." I will give you a new heart and a new name — a crown of righteousness — a crown of life — a crown of glory. Every pain and sorrow shall have an end — every tear shall be dried up — every want fully supplied — every blessing perfectly enjoyed to all eternity. The inspiring promise of the Saviour is contained in these words : "To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne." And the Father adds : "He that overcometh shall inherit all things,

and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." "The Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and lead them unto living fountains of waters." "God himself shall be with them, and be their God ; and shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain : for the former things are passed away." They shall enjoy the smiles of His countenance, whose favor is life, and whose loving-kindness is better than life. His gracious presence shall go with them through this vale of tears — his rod and staff shall lead and comfort them in all their afflictions and trials. He himself shall be with them through the valley of the shadow of death, and bring them to his kingdom of glory beyond the grave. "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." They shall be brought into the palace of the King, and there they shall abide. O believer ! "all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come ; all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." All the blessings of grace and glory are yours — God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — all that God in his infinite wisdom and goodness can bestow, and man can receive and enjoy.

But no tongue can tell these blessings — no imagination can conceive their full import. "As it is written,

eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love him." 1 Cor. ii: 9. The veil that hides the future is still spread over the face of all nations, but it will be removed, and then these blessings will shine in all their glory and excellence. "Now we see through a glass darkly ; but then face to face : now I know in part ; but then shall I know even as also I am known." Not to say anything about these blessings in future, even in this life virtue brings its own reward. Godliness with contentment is great gain ; it is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. Pardon, alone, is sufficient to term salvation great ; for without it no other blessing can be enjoyed. While the wrath and curse of God rest on man, he pines away in his sins amid pleasures and palaces, sumptuous fare, and treasures of fine gold. While the works of creation and providence are *relatively*, salvation is *absolutely great* ; yea, infinite. It is nothing less than God in Christ revealed and communicated to man. It is infinite, because the person of the Saviour, in whom it rests, is also infinite. Its greatness involves everlasting and unchangeable love, infinite wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, mercy, and truth ; unsearchable riches of grace, and supreme and endless felicity. Here God imparts himself in

covenant blessings to his people. He that is our God is the God of our salvation. Then let us pray —

“ To us thy great salvation show ;
Give us a taste of love divine,
That we thy people’s joy may know,
And in their holy triumph join.”

Blessed and adored Saviour ! make me a member of thy mystical body, that I may even now rejoice in this great salvation — make me pure in heart, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, patiently enduring trials, daily exercising faith in thy word, merits, power and faithfulness, and ever rejoicing in the perpetuity of thy grace, which lives in all thy people and preserves them unto thy eternal kingdom and glory. Let my whole heart praise thee, thou God of my salvation ! Let my whole life be consecrated to thy service ! It is thy prerogative to renew the soul. Oh ! renew me in the whole man, after thy own image. Lift on me the light of thy countenance — reveal thy mediation, and make clear my title to this great salvation, and thereby impart

“ What nothing earthly gives, or can destroy,
The soul’s calm sunshine, and the heart-felt joy.”

O, my soul ! survey this great salvation, and at each step let higher wonder rise. Consider its contrivance, its accomplishment and application — the Gospel

which reveals it—the witness and sanctions which confirm it—the evil from which it delivers us, and the blessings it procures for us. Consider it, my kinsmen and my fellow sinners, that we may experience its joys and celebrate its praise, both in the Church below and with the Choirs above. It is great beyond measure. Glorious beyond all praise is the Gospel which reveals it, and the means by which it is procured and obtained. It communicates and offers the richest blessings—riches endless, and enjoyments infinite—all that can make us wise, and holy, and happy, and immortal as the friends of God and heirs of his glory. The blessings are spiritual, precious and lasting beyond finite conception. They belong to soul and body, and extend through time and eternity. In this life they contain divine guidance, protection, support, consolation, holiness and peace which passes all understanding; hope, which makes not ashamed, and has an anchor for the soul both sure and steadfast; and joy, which the world can neither give nor take away. They contain the best provision, the best conduct, and the most perfect security. They begin in the day of regeneration, continue through life and death, and follow us beyond the grave. Then they will assume a more bright and glorious aspect. Then our vile bodies will be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. They

will be adorned and invigorated with youth, strength, beauty and immortality ; and our minds will be pure, vigorous and happy. Members of God's family, we shall dwell in his presence, and advance forever in knowledge, virtue, love, peace and joy, and in friendship with all the redeemed, who are sons and daughters, kings and priests unto God the Father. These blessings are great beyond expression and conception. They are sufficient to satisfy the mind of men and angels. They prove the greatness of salvation, and the supreme honor, glory and felicity to which man will be advanced around the throne of God.

“ And what, in yonder realms above,
Is ransomed man ordained to be ?
With honor, holiness and love,
No seraph more adorned than he.

Nearest the throne, and first in song,
Man shall his halleluiahs raise ;
While wondering angels round him throng,
And swell the chorus of his praise.”

III.

NEGLECT OF SALVATION.

“ Can sinners hope for heaven,
Who love this world so well?
Or dream of future happiness,
While on the road to hell? ”

CAN men hope for happiness, while in the various range of thought they neglect the one thing needful? The world, from which their joys and sorrows spring, is the all absorbing theme of their thoughts, words and actions. Year after year, till all are fled, they spend their precious time in the eager pursuit of this vain and fleeting world, without giving salvation one serious thought. The trifling things of this life are the topics about which they talk with delight and fluency and eloquence which would grace a better cause. This is the element in which they live and move and have their being, and which excludes every thing of a religious nature, except the external form and ceremony. With them practical religion is entirely out of the question — a mere name and nothing more. They do not search the Scriptures to know what is the true state of their souls before God now, and what will become of them at death and

judgment, or what they must now do to be saved. Spiritual and eternal things make no impression on their vain minds—the Gospel is esteemed as a tale that is told, and future happiness or misery, a mere fiction. Instead of searching for salvation as for hid treasure, they ask what need is there for so much ado about it. They freely and faithfully serve divers lusts and pleasures, but grudge all they do for Christ and their own souls. For God who made them, and Christ who redeems them, they are afraid of doing too much. They count the Sabbath a weariness, and live without God and without hope in the world—shun his House of Prayer, make a mock of religion, and treat with supercilious disdain the humble followers of the Lamb. Their energies are spent in striving to promote their own and their dear friends' worldly prosperity and fame, without scarcely naming their eternal welfare. In consequence of this conduct, they have no true and saving knowledge of God and the Saviour and the things which belong to their everlasting peace, and offer many vain excuses for their willful ignorance. Such is generally the character and conduct of those who neglect salvation. But why is this negligence found among intelligent beings, who must live forever under the favor or frowns of Heaven?

INDIFFERENCE ABOUT THE STATE OF THEIR SOULS IS ONE CAUSE OF MANY NEGLECTING SALVATION. Living under the deceitful and destructive power of sin, they

desire not the knowledge of God, nor the joys and glories of a blessed immortality. Religion has no charms for them. It may live or die, and they are unconcerned. Indulging the fond but delusive hope that the sunshine of their worldly prosperity will never end, they say to the messengers of peace, "Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." "To-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant." "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep," and so they sleep on until embraced in the icy arms of death. They never arise as returning prodigals awakened to a sense of their extreme want, and go to God, saying, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants." As slothful servants they trifle away the day of grace, and become such objects of spiritual poverty and wretchedness, that my soul weeps in secret for them, and my eyes run down with tears, while *passengers their faces turn away, and delicate and tender woman takes another path*. How descriptive of their conduct is the language of the poet:

"Sloth lay till mid-day turning on his couch,
Like ponderous door upon its weary hinge,
And having rolled him out with much ado,
And many a dismal sigh and vain attempt,
He sauntered out, accoutered carelessly—

With half-oped, misty, unobservant eye,
Somniferous, that weighed the object down
On which its burden hung—an hour or two,
Then with a groan retired to rest again.”

To them the Saviour will at last say : “ I have called and ye refused : Depart from me : Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness ; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Is not that lamentable indifference, which so much prevails in reference to spiritual things, the ruin of thousands ? And is not this doctrine clearly taught, when Jesus says · “ He that is not with me is against me.” None of those men who received a cordial invitation, and who all with one consent began to make excuse and to make light of it, shall taste of my Supper. Is not this great evil found among all classes of the social world—learned and unlearned, rude, polite and refined ? Is it not the great sin of the age to make light of Christ and the Gospel, and neglect that salvation which “ has all the weight of eternity appended to its glories, and all the worth of Divinity involved in its principles ” ? And do not some endeavor to establish their own righteousness for justification before God, and thus subvert the plan of redemption by Jesus Christ ? These persons are not avowed enemies of the Saviour—they profess to be neither for nor against him, and merely to prefer their own secular interests to those of his kingdom. But

are they not either his friends or his foes? Can they stand on neutral ground in matters of so great importance?

Indifference to Christ and his cause is not less offensive to him, and ruinous to man, than open and active hostility. In either case, self is the idol of worship; but the former is more hopeless than the latter, as may be inferred from the history of Paul, who persecuted the Church; of Gallio, who cared for none of these things; and of Agrippa, who was *almost*, but never *altogether* persuaded to be a Christian. The hearts of such persons are generally hard as the nether millstone; their affections cold as the grave; their conscience seared as with a hot iron, and their souls given over to the sleep of death. Given up to such an indifferent and dormant state, they are not allured by the ineffable glories of heaven, nor alarmed by the untold agonies of hell. Under the withering and blighting influence of this *moral pestilence*, the entire man is so benumbed and ossified into spiritual death, that he is seldom moved until melted amidst the flames of the dark sulphurous pit of the undone. A despised salvation terminates in everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power. The woe pronounced against Corazin and Bethsaida for their impenitence, or the doom of Jerusalem for neglecting the things which belonged to her peace, follows those guilty of similar conduct, as dark-

ness follows the setting sun. Oh! may we never be given up to indifference, lukewarmness, or contemptible neutrality — to blindness of mind and hardness of heart — to stop our ears and close our eyes on the glories of the kingdom of Christ, lest at any time we should see with our eyes, and hear with our ears, and should understand with our hearts, and should be converted and healed. May we never be indifferent to the essential glories of the Cross; but may they, with all the stupendous realities of eternity, hold the throne in our hearts. Let not our distinguished and precious privileges, civil and religious, be abused. Let not worldly gain, honors, titles and pleasures allure us from the great salvation. Let us not glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto us, and we unto the world; and let us never forget that he who neglects Christ Jesus, “will become a living hell of remorse within, encircled with an inflicted hell of agony without, forevermore.”

A WORLDLY AND COVETOUS SPIRIT IS ANOTHER CAUSE OF NEGLECTING SALVATION. Actuated by this evil spirit, how many ardently love and eagerly pursue this vain world! Erroneously supposing “gain is godliness,” and that a man’s life consists in the abundance of the things which he possesses, they heap up gold as the dust, and vainly suppose that this will procure happiness, the divine favor, and all the joys

of heaven. They make gold their hope, and say to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence. Their inward thought is that their houses shall continue forever, and their dwelling places to all generations. They call their lands after their own names, and kneel at the shrine of wealth and fame and the god of this world. They make the kingdom of Heaven and their eternal salvation subordinate to temporal things, and often find, to their everlasting sorrow, that the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word and render it unfruitful. "The love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." 1 Tim. vi: 9, 10. Oh, trust not in uncertain riches —

"Lean not on earth; 'twill pierce thee to the heart;
A broken reed at best, but oft a spear;
On its sharp point peace bleeds, and hope expires."

Here is the test of character: "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." "Hereby many deceive their own souls: goods, lands, possessions, relations, trades, with secular interest in them, are the things whose image is drawn on their minds, and whose characters are written on their foreheads, as the titles whereby they may be known." As believers, beholding the glory of Christ in the image of

the Gospel, are changed into the same image by the Spirit of the Lord ; so these persons, beholding the beauty of the world, and the things that are in it, in the glass of self-love, are in their minds changed into the same image. Hence perplexing fears, delusive hopes, empty embraces of worldly things, fruitless desires, carnal designs, and vain imaginations, created and fed by the love of the world and self, abide and prevail in them. Among these persons are found all classes, busily employed until their last hope expires.

“ In time’s pursuits men run till out of breath
The astronomer soared up, and counted stars,
And gazed and gazed upon heaven’s bright face,
Till he dropt down dim-eyed into the grave.
The numerist, in calculations deep
Grew gray. The merchant at his desk expired.
The statesman hunted for another place,
Till death o’ertook him, and made him his prey.
The miser spent his eldest energy
In grasping for another mite. The scribe
Rubbed pensively his old and withered brow,
Devising new impediments to hold
In doubt the suit that threatened to end too soon.
The priest collected tithes and pleaded rights
Of decimation to the very last.
In science, learning, all philosophy,
Men labored all their days, and labored hard,
And dying, sighed how little they had done :
But in religion they at once grew wise.
A creed in print, though never understood,
A theologic system on the shelf,

Was spiritual lore enough, and served their turn :
But served it ill. They sinned and never knew ;
For what the Bible said of good and bad,
Of holiness and sin, they never asked."

Every form of rebellion in the heart tends to destroy man's allegiance to his Maker. Covetousness, human science, political fame, and a blind reverence for false respectability, steal the heart from the vast concerns of eternity. A base passion for wealth excludes God from the conscience, and Christ and salvation from the mind. It leads those in whom it dwells, to make gold their hope and confidence, and deny the God that is above. No one base passion so intensely absorbs and dries up all the energies of a human being as a lust for wealth. It enters man's inner nature, and transforms him into the base metal which he adores. "His soul is dilated into his God, and out of an abundant profit is denoted the only paradise after which he aspires; and never has benighted Pagan, in the utmost prostration of heart and intellect, bowed before his enthroned image with more idolatrous intensity of spirit, than bends the baptized adorer of modern wealth before the shrines which his mammon has erected. What the infinite, the true and the eternal are to the genuine Christian, that,—cash, income and accumulation are to the fanatic pursuer of riches. They attract him, they inspire him, they animate his primal hopes, and constitute his

recompense. They wield such an entire mastery over his reason, conscience and will, as to become the lords of his conduct and the laws of his being. Nothing is more base and flagitious than a covetous man ; because as much as in him lies, he thrusts God from the throne of his majesty, and sets up money in his place.”—(*Montgomery.*) Then beware of covetousness. It is idolatry, and the ruling spirit of the age, appearing in commerce, in politics, in science, and in song. What a serious thought is contained in these inspired words : “How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God” ! “They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition : for the love of money is the root of all evil.” Achan’s theft, Gehazi’s lie, Ahab’s murder, and Judah’s treachery, are prototypes of the destructive power of covetousness.

“ O cursed lust of gold ! when for thy sake
The fool throws up his interest in both worlds ;
First starved in this, then damned in that to come ! ”

The insatiable spirit of avarice affects all classes and every age. Since money is the standard of respectability, children are cradled amid the jargon of profit and loss, and trained in the creed of “getting on in the world ;” and “without a miracle of grace, these kindred scions of worldly stock will go down to their

dishonored graves without feeling their God or fearing their eternity." No man can serve two masters, and no state of heart is so prone to neglect salvation as that which idolizes gold. It will form the character and rule the conduct of the man who bows before its glittering shrine, sear his conscience, and lead him to the desecration of the Sabbath and the commission of all evil. All the sweet and tender sympathies of life are blighted before its withering blast—all taste for refined and sacred literature is destroyed, and the soul is robbed of the ineffable joys of Heaven. It grinds down the faces of the poor to the lowest state of degradation, and sinks them to a state of "mental ruin, until they become mere wrecks of a withered mind, and little better than hired machines who surrender their personality for the sake of their bread." The treasure of the mere worldling is not in heaven. His mind is roving to the ends of the earth—his heart is engrossed with the world, and his ears listen only to the "sound of the waves that waft his vessel, or the whirl of the engine that carries his train." Spiritual life is unknown to him—salvation neglected and forgotten. Under the pressure of outward circumstances, a religion is *screwed* on the worldling, but how vastly different is it from that which is *breathed* into the believer by the Spirit of the Lord. The former is put off—the latter abides. His heart is filled with the vanities of this world and has no room for the

love of God and the glories of the world to come ; because avarice benumbs the conscience, tyrannizes over the soul, and destroys the dread of eternity in the worldling, until he idolizes gold for its own sake ; and you will find him, in the sunset of life, “ a moneyed wretch, without a creed or a conscience, a human friend to console him, or a reconciled God to sustain him.” The sublime rewards of heaven, or the stupendous agonies of hell, have lost their effect on him. The heaven which attracts him is worldly increase — the hell which alarms him is worldly loss. He is the most deplorable picture of fallen humanity — the thorough-paced, cool, calculating, heartless wretch, who maintains his ardent desire for mammon until eternity throws its awful shadow over his undone spirit. O, how lamentable will his case be, when life’s struggle is over, and his spirit appears before the Supreme Judge of all ! Would he not then be willing to give ten thousand worlds to purchase the favor of God ? But all will be in vain, because *too late* ! Oh, may that worldly spirit, which is the ruin of so many souls, be speedily overcome by the Spirit of the Lord, working in the hearts of men, and leading them *now* to secure that inheritance which is reserved in heaven for all the children of light !

A THIRD CAUSE OF NEGLECTING SALVATION IS THE VAIN HOPE OF EASILY OBTAINING IT AT SOME FUTURE PERIOD, OR OF FINALLY ESCAPING DESERVED PUNISH-

MENT. Under this delusion many postpone the great salvation. Their practical language is : A long life lies before us, and after other pressing business or pleasure is finished, there will be time enough for spiritual things : Now we have much goods laid up for many years ; let us eat, drink and be merry — let us rejoice in the days of our youth, walk in the ways of our heart, and in the sight of our eyes : Or let us study the arts and sciences, pluck the laurels of fame, and enjoy pleasure : Let us attend our farms and merchandise and domestic concerns ; and when our heart has rejoiced in the labor of our hands, we will retire from the world and attend to the interests of the soul : Now present objects are of the utmost importance — they demand all our attention, care, energy and anxiety — they must engross our minds, hopes, fears, joys and sorrows : To be rich and honorable is the sum of human bliss ; and amid the eager pursuit of wealth, honor and pleasure, we will still keep in view the eternal welfare of the soul ; but for temporal things we must now struggle and agonize, watch and pray, lest we fail to obtain them, or by their loss we are brought to utter ruin.

But what is the amount of all these flattering hopes ? “ What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he has gained, when God takes away his soul ? ” Do such persons ever reflect on the brevity and uncertainty of human life — how many are cut off in youth — how

few arrive at old age — how few are converted at the eleventh hour — how seldom death-bed repentance is evangelical and real? Do they consider that every day and year they are becoming more sinful and odious in the sight of God — their guilt hourly accumulating — their evil habits strengthening — their hopes of returning diminishing, and the difficulties of salvation increasing? Do they not see that those who postpone repentance, generally become more hardened in sin, and die as they lived? Alas! the bands of sin become strong in old age, when men are less able to lay it aside, and engage in the unequal conflict. Then some learn by experience that human life is one scene of delusion.

“ Hope springs eternal in the human breast,
Man never *is*, but always to *be* blest.”

Ah! you have spent your transient day on earth, and salvation is not obtained. Then on the verge of the grave, and bidding adieu to the world, its cares, hopes and pleasures, how do temporal things, for which you have labored and spent your eldest energies, appear? What are they now worth, compared with your eternal salvation? Where now are they, and the hopes and pleasures which engrossed your thoughts and desires and labors, and with a voice more enchanting and deceitful than the fabled Sirens once sung to you, “ Let us pluck the rose-buds ere

they wither," and withhold not our heart from any joy? Are they gone, after alluring you by their enchantments, from the path of duty and safety? Have you listened to their magic song, instead of to the voice of God, declaring in the sweetest tones of mercy, "I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me" — "Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than fine gold; for wisdom is better than rubies, and all the things that may be desired, are not to be compared to it; I will cause those that love me to inherit substance, and I will fill their treasures." Oh, have you refused these infinite blessings, and turned a deaf ear to the entreating voice of God? Then when the veil will be drawn, how will your negligence appear — how will your avarice, ambition, and care for the world appear? Of what value will be the treasures for which you have struggled — the offices for which you have toiled — the honors for which you have sacrificed truth and duty, and the power for which you have sighed? Instead of laboring for God and salvation, you have labored for these vanities; spent your strength for nought and in vain; sowed to the wind, and shall reap the whirlwind. Now your day is fast declining, and your furrowed cheeks, and hoary locks, and trembling limbs declare your day is far spent; your night is at hand; you are standing on the verge of eternity, and the great work of repentance and sal-

vation has been deferred. God is saying: "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." The King of Terrors is knocking at the door—the veil of the invisible world is rending—Heaven is closing her door, and Hell is yawning to receive you. Now you are astonished at your negligence and disregard of the word of God, proclaiming the guilt and doom of the impenitent, and the happiness of those who believe in Jesus Christ. Now the sin of neglecting so great salvation, and all the means by which it is obtained, appears to be one of the greatest magnitude. Time was when you could have obtained it; but now that time is gone, and you feel that you are left a hardened sinner in the hands of God, impenitent, unpardoned, without hope, at the gate of death, the Saviour slighted, the Spirit quenched and gone, and the tremendous Judgment before you. Dreadful state! How amazing! How alarming to the negligent sinner, indulging the flattering hope that salvation may be easily obtained at some future, convenient season! Presumptuous and deluded man! One case of conversion at the eleventh hour is left on record, that none may despair; and but one, that none may presume. Now, while the door of Heaven is open—while the Sabbath smiles with peace and hope, and the Sanctuary sounds with praises of redeeming love—while God, with a voice of mercy, calls, "Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die"—

while the Saviour, in compassion, says, "Come, take the water of life freely," and the Spirit and the Bride say, "Come," do not postpone salvation any longer, "lest thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed; and say, how have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof, and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me;" PR. v: 11-13 or lest you utter that bitter lamentation, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." JE. viii: 20. *Not saved! not saved!* O, what words are these to dwell on forever, when sharpened recollection will recall, with the most tender emotions, the day of grace which will dawn no more; the Sabbaths which once smiled with peace and joy; the importunate prayers that were made for sinners, and the infinite blessings of salvation that were freely offered by a compassionate Saviour, and rejected.

But after all these blasted hopes, the delusion follows some to the portal of the grave — down to the very gate of hell. Then do you hope to escape by the doctrine of universal salvation — by means of outward morality or external observance of the law — by deeds of charity and benevolence — by ancestry, profession, wealth, honor and office — by hiding from the presence of the Lord, or by building a tower whose top may reach to heaven? Remember, these fond hopes are false and fleeting, for they are human

devices which subvert the plan of salvation by Jesus Christ. By them you cannot say, with hope of success : "I will ascend into heaven ; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God ; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds ; I will be like the Most High."

Remember, the Bible divides all men into two classes, describes their characters, and declares their future states, and their rewards and punishment. It teaches that mere morality, or keeping the commandments in the *letter*, and not in the *spirit*, is found in persons who are entire strangers to the spirituality of the law, and the love of God in the heart ; and that this kind of religion has ruined thousands. If God should mark iniquity, who can stand ? "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." Charity and benevolence cannot atone for sin. Parentage, profession, wealth, honor and office will not justify negligence and save men. The Jews cried, in the pride of ancestry, "We have Abraham to our father." They sat in Moses' seat, made long prayers, paid tithes, and professed to be the most faithful and zealous advocates of the law — built the tombs of the prophets, and garnished the sepulchres of the righteous ; but they neglected the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith — were like whited sepulchres, beautiful outward, but within were full of hypocrisy and iniquity, a generation of vipers that

could not "escape the damnation of hell." Mt. xxiii. Then, "except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Mt. v: 20.

But failing by all these means, do you hope to escape by denying the charge of negligence — by bribery — by resistance — by flight, or by concealment? These hopes are equally vain and fallacious. Hence we entreat you to abandon them entirely, and no longer postpone the most important duty of life. Behold, *now* is the accepted time! behold, *now* is the day of salvation!

"Be wise to-day, 'tis madness to defer,
Next day the fatal precedent will plead;
Thus on, till wisdom is pushed out of life.
Procrastination is the thief of time.
Year after year it steals till all are fled,
And to the mercies of a moment leaves
The vast concerns of an eternal scene."

After all, AN EVIL HEART OF UNBELIEF, in departing from the living God, is the great moving cause of neglecting so great salvation. Unbelief condemns the world, and closes heaven against the sinner. He. iii: 12-19. It is a noxious plant which grows in the soil of the human heart; and while it extends its roots and spreads its branches, no plant of grace will thrive there.

As a consequence, CERTAIN DOOM FOLLOWS THE NEG-

LECT OF SALVATION. The divine perfections require punishment for such negligence, and, though with tardy steps, Justice will overtake the transgressor.

“ The sun of justice may withdraw his beams
Awhile from earthly ken, and sit concealed
In dark recess, pavilioned round with clouds ;
Yet, let not guilt presumptuous rear her crest.”

In the exercise of justice, divine displeasure at sin has been and will yet be most terribly displayed. God is just, faithful and true, omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent ; and will not let the impenitent sinner finally escape deserved punishment. His *presence* and agency are in all places, at all times, and in all things. He is present to protect his people, supply their wants, and reward their services ; and “ there is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.” “ Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight.” He. iv: 13.

“ Whither shall I go from thy Spirit ?
Or whither shall I flee from thy presence ?
If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there :
If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.
If I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
Even there shall thy hand lead me.
If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me,
Even the night shall be light about me.
Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee ;
But the night shineth as the day.
The darkness and the light are both alike to thee.”

Under every temptation to sin, and when no human eye beholds, One sees who is more to be feared than all human witnesses. No height or depth, or distance, or darkness, can hide sinners from his presence. He says, "Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down; and though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence; and though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent and he shall bite them; and though they go into captivity before their enemies, thence will I command the sword and it shall devour them."

Amos, ix. 2-4. "Though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord." He sees and rewards the righteous, and will expose to scorn the hypocrite, who gained the applause of virtue by his studied and successful imitation of it. He will befriend and protect the righteous every where in the universe — amid the storms of sea and land, the war of elements, and the strife of tongues and nations. How delightful to the believer is the thought that God is omnipresent. "It is fitted to enliven every scene, and to sweeten every condition. It will make the springs of joy burst out in the parched and thirsty wilderness, and clothe the naked and cheerless waste with verdure. It will give a relish to a dry morsel and a cup of cold water. It will lighten the

pressure of poverty and soothe the pangs of affliction. It will dissipate the horrors of a dungeon, and console the exile from his country and his friends." When all things seem to be against him, it enables him to say to God in the language of confidence, "Nevertheless I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." Ps. lxxiii.

The heathen generally confined their deities to a particular place, and had similar notions of the true God, as appears from Scripture and their own language. When Israel overthrew the Syrians in battle, "the servants of the king of Syria said unto him, their gods are gods of the hills, therefore they were stronger than we; but let us fight against them in the plain and surely we shall be stronger than they." 1 Ki. xx: 23 But some of the heathen had more correct and exalted views of the God of Heaven, and in a certain sense believed in his omnipresence. Seneca says: "We meet him every where; no place is without him; he fills his own works;"* and Virgil declares—

"For God the whole created mass inspires,
Thro' heav'n and earth and ocean's depths he throws
His influence round and kindles as he goes."†

The Bible assures us that God is present in all places and with all his creatures. "Am I a God at hand,

* Benefic. Lib. iv: 8.

† Georgics, Lib. iv: 221.

saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord."

"Lo! the poor Indian sees God in clouds,
And hears him in the wind."

He is visible in the opening bud and expanded blade—in the green and tender herb—in the flower "born to blush unseen"—in the calm and gentle breeze—the furious storm—the rolling wave—the fervid sun—the pale moon, and in the twinkling stars of night. All things are full of him.

—"The glittering stars,
By the deep ear of meditation heard,
Still in their midnight-watches sing of Him.
He nods a calm. The tempest blows his wrath.
The thunder is his voice; and the red flash
His speedy sword of justice. At his touch
The mountains flame. He shakes the solid earth,
And rocks the nations. Nor in these alone,
In ev'ry common instance God is seen."

He is *omniscient*. He knows all things, past, present and to come. "He sees the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done." "He telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names." At all times and in all places and employments, at home and abroad, asleep and awake, in life and in death, he attends to each individual and all his doings as if he were alone in the world. He searches the heart and tries the reins,

and knows our thoughts, words and actions. "His eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings." Job xxxiv: 21.

"O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my down sitting and mine uprising. Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassed my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me ; such knowledge is too wonderful for me ; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." "Can any thing be hid from him ? Does he not know things to come ? Behold the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare ; before they spring forth, I tell you of them." Isa. xlii : 9. "He announced Cyrus by name long before his parents were born, and foretold his war against Babylon, and the means by which he should obtain possession of the city. He foretold the rise and fall of the four ancient monarchies, and portrayed beforehand the characters and achievements of Alexander the Great and his successors with such particularity and truth, that Porphyres, the learned adversary of Christianity in the third century, affirmed that the prophecies must have been written after the events. He foretold the birth of Jesus Christ, the place of his nativity, and the family from which he should spring, with the particular events of his life,

and his death, although it was effected not by an immediate interposition of Providence, but by the unexpected combination of Jews and Gentiles."

God is *omnipotent*. His power is displayed in the creation of the world—in dividing this globe into land and water—in forming precious metals and minerals, and in clothing its surface with verdure, trees, plants and vegetables for the use of man and beast. The thunder storm and raging sea and howling tempest are under his control; every star that glitters in the firmament sings his praise; the moon serves to dispel the darkness of the night, and the sun pours down his golden rays to enlighten, warm and fertilize the earth, and impart comfort and peace to all people. The revolution of the seasons, from blooming spring to hoary winter, and the communication of life to vegetables and animals, declare his omnipotence. But the human mind is a more wonderful display of Divine power. It is conscious of its own operations, and capable of knowing, praising and enjoying God—of loving and being loved—of receiving and imparting instruction, comfort, peace and joy—of increasing in knowledge, and rising higher and higher in virtue, holiness and happiness in another world.

All this power is exercised with the utmost facility. To bring into existence these stupendous works, God said "Let there be light—let there be a firmament—let the waters be gathered together—let the dry land

appear — let there be lights in the firmament,” and all obeyed. The same power has been continued, undiminished, from the beginning of the world till now, in upholding and governing all things — in binding together the atoms of the universe — in connecting all its parts and operations however numerous and distant — in retaining hills, mountains, rivers and oceans in their places, or in rolling planets through their orbits with perfect order and amazing rapidity and harmony, and overruling all the operations of matter and of mind. The hand of time sweeps away the noblest monuments of human greatness, and buries in ruin cities, kingdoms and nations ; but the sun, moon and stars shine with undiminished splendor from age to age — year by year the face of nature is renewed, and the great movements of the Universe proceed with the utmost regularity under the control of Him whose kingdom ruleth over all. “Who removeth the mountains and they know not ; who overturneth them in his anger. Who shaketh the earth from her place, and the pillars thereof tremble ; who commandeth the sun and it riseth not, and sealeth up the stars ; who alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea. Who maketh Arcturus, Orion and Pleiades and the Chambers of the South. Who doth great things past finding out, yea, and wonders without number.” “He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He bind-

eth up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them. He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. He hath compassed the waters with bounds until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof. He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud. By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens — his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo ! these are parts of his ways ; but how little a portion is heard of him ?” Job, xxvi.

His power is equally displayed in the work of redemption. When redeemed unto God, the sinner is raised from death to life, and made a new creature. Old things pass away, all things become new. God fulfills in him “all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” Phil. iii : 21. In view of these divine perfections, can we escape if we neglect so great salvation ? God meets us everywhere — he knows all our wanderings — his understanding is infinite — his power supreme and irresistible.

The *history of nations* proves that no impenitent sinner can escape the just demerit of his sins. The antideluvians — the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah — the Egyptians and the seven idolatrous nations, stand as beacons to warn others. When the cup of

their iniquity was full, his own favorite people were punished for their sins. They were dispersed, and made a by-word and a hissing among all nations, and remain to this day the living monuments of God's displeasure at sin, and of the impossibility of any impenitent sinner eventually escaping deserved punishment.

Neglected duty and abused privileges bring their own rewards. Not only will the Gospel be taken from those who refuse to obey its holy precepts, but those who know their Master's will and do it not, and continue to neglect so great salvation as that which is freely offered in the Gospel and affectionately urged by all that is dear to man, will be beaten with many stripes, and ever weep, *but not in Mercy's sight*. Their only hope of safety is now to receive the Saviour, who left his Father's throne, veiled his glory in humanity, and, after a most laborious and useful life, amidst poverty, reproach and suffering, expired on Calvary to save sinners from eternal perdition. O, what infinite love and condescension dwell in the Son of God! O, who can refuse to receive a Saviour of such unbounded love and unrivaled excellence!

Let the doctrine of the divine omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence keep us from sin, and from entertaining any thoughts of escaping deserved punishment by any human device. Let it demand the profound reverence of all men, and let us also derive consolation from it; trust God, and commit our way

to his disposal. Our prayers will all be heard, and our sighs and tears will not escape his kind regard. He is a constant witness of all our conduct, and approves every honest effort to serve him, and he will amply reward the faithful. "A book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name; and they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Then, "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help; whose hope is in the Lord his God, who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that therein is; who keepeth truth forever." "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help and the sword of thy excellency! The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

THE BIBLE DECLARES THE CERTAIN DOOM OF ALL WHO NEGLECT SALVATION. Their heart cannot endure, nor their hands be strong in the days that God shall deal with them. They cannot escape the judgments of God, who despise the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; but after their hardness, and impenitent heart, treasure up wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds. Ezk. xxii: 14. Ro. ii: 6. The heavens and the

earth, the Holy Spirit, the bleeding Messiah, the infinite, the eternal, and the human, all declare it, and conscience echoes back the doom. The dread of a dark future; the awful visions of a blasted eternity; the secret and silent remorse which, like fire, consumes the soul of the guilty; the divine perfections and human responsibilities, all declare that as long as man sins, so long it will be just in God to punish him. God declares to man, by the voice of reason and revelation, providence and conscience, that the neglect of salvation begets death, remorse and despair; and that the proffers of mercy contain salvation and everlasting bliss.

All who neglect salvation reject all conceivable overtures of divine favor. They reject the Saviour, who contains all perfection and excellence, and whose incarnation, death and resurrection exhibit the justice, mercy and wisdom of God more than all his other works and ways. They reject the Gospel, which overtures the Saviour in all the freeness of his love, and fullness of his merit. The neglect of salvation issues in the unpardonable sin, because it leads the sinner to that point where repentance is impossible, and where he does despite to the Spirit of Grace; and this is the forerunner of endless woe. The unconverted man dies in sin, and cannot escape the doom of the guilty. Could we draw the veil, and look at the workings of the unrenewed heart, what disquiet-

ude and remorse would we see in many whom the world loves and applauds ! Conscience, as if set on fire of hell, preys upon their souls with a gloom and dismay which no natural sunshine can withstand. The arrows of the Almighty drink up their spirits, while the melancholy thought, that the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and they are not saved, kindles a flame of remorse in their souls.

The germs of heaven or of hell silently operate in the human soul, and "the heaven or hell of human destiny will be eternally evolved from the heaven or hell of human character." Then, how great is the necessity of purity of heart, and salvation by Jesus Christ ! He is the grand *reality*. All else is vanity and vexation of spirit. "Let the sensualist mock as he will, and the delusive world mock as it may ; the one thing needful is that one thing paramount, to which God communicates his greatness, Christ his merit, the Spirit his holiness, the angels their sympathy, and the children of light their reverence and supreme regard."

In neglecting Jesus and his salvation, you neglect the most important subject in the world, and the most glorious person who obtained our redemption. Then, is there no folly and no ingratitude in neglecting such a subject and such a Saviour ? O, why does not this momentous subject overwhelm you, or inspire you with double diligence and more fervent prayer, holy

zeal and constant energy, to obtain eternal life? Could you feel even for a moment the happiness of heaven, or the misery of hell, would you not struggle for salvation as you will soon struggle for life? Or do you not care what becomes of your souls—whether they are saved or lost? Do you prefer the momentary pleasures of the world to the joys that are above? What will be the result of this preference? Will worldly wealth and worldly honors and pleasures and kingdoms and crowns, compensate for the loss of your souls? Of what value will those things be to you when the commissioned Angel will swear that *Time shall be no longer?* Then what will be the end of those who know not God and obey not the Gospel? Death will come, and after that the judgment—the tremendous judgment—and where will they stand and how will they appear before the Supreme Judge of all, and what will they answer for all their willful negligence? Will they stand speechless, or will they cry to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.” Their cry will be in vain. Jesus will answer, “I have called and ye refused. Ye knew your Master’s will but did it not; depart from me ye cursed.” Your happiness is now at an end; distress and anguish have come upon you, and not a friend is left to console you, nor a friendly

hut to which you can betake yourselves for shelter from the devouring flames.

In comparison with salvation, nothing deserves a name, or a thought, and this will appear in the last great day when the veil of delusion will be drawn from your eyes, and all your vain excuses for sinful negligence will vanish like smoke. Oh, that your eyes were now opened to see the supreme excellence of Jesus, and the infinite importance of religion and salvation! If you have hitherto neglected salvation—disobeyed parents and Christian friends and ministers of the Gospel, and slighted the Saviour, and turned a deaf ear to the voice of mercy, do so no longer, lest Jesus will at last disown you, and devils mock and angels weep, and you will go “where griefs forever live and sorrows forever multiply, and remorse forever reigns, and darkness and despair forever dwell.” Oh, do not neglect your own salvation, but arouse to a sense of your duty and your best interests. “Acquaint now thyself with God and be at peace—thereby good shall come unto thee.” Welcome and embrace the blessed Saviour, and he will wash away your sins, adorn you with the robe of righteousness, crown you with a crown of life, and give you an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away—reserved in heaven for all the children of light.

IV.

SALVATION TO THE UTTERMOST.

“ Come ye sinners, poor and wretched,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore,
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, love and power :
He is able,
He is willing, doubt no more !”

The announcement of salvation to the uttermost is most joyful and welcome news to the awakened and anxious sinner. Like the proclamation of pardon to a criminal led out for execution, it is full of the greatest joy and consolation. It removes his distressing fears, dispels his awful gloom, fills his soul with light and love, and inspires him with hope. It contains the length and breadth, depth and height of redeeming love, and furnishes a theme for the sweetest and noblest song of men and angels to all eternity. These glad tidings are proclaimed in the Gospel, which freely offers us a Saviour of infinite dignity, supreme excellence and power, and all-sufficient to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him. But they are proclaimed to many who are so hardened through the deceitfulness of sin that they are not sensible of their

wants, and so blinded by the god of this world that they cannot see the transcendent beauty and excellence of the infinite blessings they contain. They blaspheme the name of Jesus, deride his word and people, and treat with scorn and insolent contempt and determined hostility the Son of God, who came to save men from their sins.

While the beauties of creation, and the transcendent glories of the Cross shine around them with supreme splendor, and while life and death — the blessing and the curse — the pains of the one and the pleasures of the other, are set before them in the Gospel, they sleep on in sin. In this state of spiritual slumber and death they have no earnest desire for salvation, because they neither feel their enormous sins nor see their extreme danger. What a state of moral ruin! May those who look on, derive from a state so awful and distressing, lessons of the greatest utility. It is sufficient to arouse the ear of sloth, and sound an alarm to the heart of stupidity, where lessons of inferior importance would be entirely disregarded.

But others, under a deep conviction of their sin and misery, anxiously inquire if there is salvation for such abandoned sinners as they are. They have long sinned against warnings, invitations, convictions, prayers, vows and engagements — against the clearest light, the purest love and the greatest mercies, and are fallen so deep into the pit of moral pollution, that they raise the

melancholy and despairing cry, "There is no hope — God's mercy is clean gone forever." In tones of thunder the law pronounces death upon every soul that doeth evil. It makes no provision for faith, repentance, forgiveness, reconciliation, and admission into heaven. But does the Gospel make this provision for sinners, even the chief; for unjust, extortioners, adulterers, publicans, harlots, backsliders, and all kinds of sinners? To its everlasting honor, it provides salvation even for such. It is designed for sinners of every kind and degree of guilt. It opens a new and living way of deliverance for them through faith in Christ Jesus. It takes men where it finds them — in a state of sin and utter ruin, guilty and helpless — and in that state offers them a Saviour, all-sufficient, mighty to save, divinely great and glorious, excellent and lovely. He has made salvation possible even for them; easy and certain in their coming to God by him. He forms the principle of Grace in their hearts in due time, carries it on through life, and completes it in glory. Now they feel their great moral distance from God, and are afraid of his judgments. They think they are further from him than any one in the world. As prodigals they have wandered far from God into a region of sin and misery, where no rest is found for the soul, lost, bewildered and forgotten. But cast out of his sight in that state of absolute want

and wretchedness, they desire to arise and go to him if peradventure they may yet live.

Poor, trembling, doubting and desponding sinner, there is salvation even for *you* — *salvation to the uttermost — to the outside — the last — the extreme point of human guilt and ruin.* The salvation which Jesus Christ has obtained and freely and fully offers you, extends to the very *extremity* of ruin and death. “There is no degree of guilt for which it has not provided a full pardon. There are no sins too many; there is no burden too heavy for a salvation like this. Though our sins be truly infinite in number; though they are more than the hairs of our head, or the sands on the sea shore, or the drops of the ocean, or the leaves of the forest, or the stars of heaven, or all these multiplied together, yet this salvation goes infinitely above and beyond them all. Though they be awfully heinous and aggravated, like scarlet, or crimson, unspeakably abominable and loathsome, nay, black as hell, yet still this salvation goes far beyond them. Nor can any sinner be too vile and polluted to be saved. He may be sunk deepest of all in the horrible pit and miry clay; his soul may be a cage of unclean birds, hateful and filthy beyond human conception, yet still there is salvation for him here.” There is none too vile, none too dead in trespasses and sins for Christ to cleanse and save. There is no limit to his power and grace. No heart is so hard that he

cannot soften it ; no soul too poor and needy for the riches of his grace. "His fullness is the fullness of God, and that is infinite." "It pleased the Father that in him all fullness should dwell ;" and it is out of his fullness we all receive, and grace for grace. "He has peace for the most troubled, rest for the most weary, light for the darkest, joy for the most sorrowful, calm for the most tempest-tost, perfect blessedness for the most wretched of all." He is able to save to the uttermost. "Take your station on the highest eminence of earth. Look around on this fallen world. Look backward on the condition of sin and wretchedness in which its millions have been involved for nearly six thousand years. Look forward and conceive the guilt in which it is to be yet more fearfully sunk ere the day of its glory come. Look on every side of you in this present generation, see the pollution, the guilt, the abominations, the enormities with which it is flooded. Take a wider circle, and conceive what lie beyond these — the crimes, the atrocities perpetrated in secret, unseen by the eye of man, deeds done in darkness, and fit only to be named in darkness — every thing conceivable on this side of hell. Take a yet wider circle, and imagine, if it be possible, how much more than all this, God's eye discovers, and God's soul abhors in what has been done and is yet doing on the surface of this fallen earth. Take the very widest possible circle of human guilt, the deepest ruin of

mortal sin, and imagine, in addition to these, all possible difficulties and hindrances ; still beyond that widest circle, yea, infinitely beyond the farthest that man's guilt has compassed, is the power of Jesus to save. For his salvation is to the uttermost. His is the salvation of God. The sinner may indeed have gone to the very extremity of guilt—to the very ends of the earth, in his wanderings from God ; yea, he may have gone to the very gates of hell, and been knocking for admittance there. He may be a brand already set on fire of hell ; yet even thence the arm and power of Jesus can pluck him ; even from the gates of hell can the outstretched hand of Jesus save.”—(*Dr. Alexander.*)

SALVATION TO THE UTTERMOST IS EVINCED FROM THE OFFICIAL CHARACTER OF THE SAVIOUR. He is the Daysman—the Mediator between Heaven and earth. “There is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” 1 Tim. ii : 3. For the mediatorial office he was perfectly qualified by uniting the human nature with the divine in his own person, that he might be allied to both parties at variance ; be capable of suffering and dying ; of sustaining the enormous load of wrath due for sin ; and of establishing a perfect harmony between the glory of God and the salvation of man. He was invested with all necessary qualifications for this office—with power to lay down his life, and power to take it again—power over all flesh to bring many sons to glory. As a Prince, he

had power with God, to prevail in prayer, and obtain whatever he would ask — power over man, to reach his heart by his word and Spirit ; “ by the irresistible claims of his blood, and the attractive displays of his grace.” As holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, he died in our room, and made reconciliation for iniquity ; and “ If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”

Ro. v: 10.

He executes this office in both natures, divine and human — on earth and in heaven. The natures are not separated, nor blended ; but so united in his person, that the divine coöperates with the human, in all things which pertain to the salvation of man. As God, he “ sends the Holy Spirit, reigns over the Church, reveals the mysteries which none could know but he who is in the bosom of the Father.” As Man, he “ died, rose from the grave, and ascended to Heaven — took possession of the heavenly glory in our name, and intercedes for us before the throne of his Father.”

“ What glory does the mediation reflect on our Redeemer ? Standing between Heaven and earth, he conducts a negotiation, on which depend the interests of both. He stands alone — his own arm brings salvation ; and of the people there is none with him. The work which he is performing surpasses every other in its nature and consequences. To him are committed

the care of the divine honor and the happiness of the human race; and by him are all things made new. Human nature is raised from the ruins of the fall; Paradise is regained, and the everlasting triumph of righteousness and truth over error and sin is secured."

This office is necessary to make atonement for sin, restore peace, and obtain salvation for man. It extends to all the acts by which sinners are reconciled to God, fitted for communion with him, and raised to perfect holiness and happiness in Heaven. —It includes the offices of Prophet, Priest and King. As a Prophet, he teaches us by his word and Spirit, and enables us to see the great things of his law, the glorious mysteries of the Gospel, the beauties of holiness, the glory of God, and the splendors of his eternal throne. How precious are these lessons of divine wisdom to a bewildered soul! How precious are the words of his lips — how delightful to hear him reveal the way of peace and happiness — how reviving to hear his gracious promises and invitations to poor, weary, heavy-laden, broken-hearted sinners, even the chief! His words have been the treasure, support and joy of believers in all ages. They have esteemed them more than their necessary food — sweeter than honey — more to be desired than gold — better than thousands of gold and silver — their comfort in affliction, and their song in the house of their pilgrimage! Oh, may we be savingly taught by this great Prophet of the Highest!

As a King, he subdues us to himself, rules in us, and reigns over us ; restrains and conquers all his and our enemies. He gives laws perfectly holy, wise and good, enforced by the highest sanctions — everlasting rewards and punishments. He is the Head over all things to the Church ; appoints her laws and ordinances, and makes all things subservient to her interests. The various ranks of creatures in heaven, earth and hell are subject to his direction and control, and must coöperate for the good of his people. According to his pleasure, he reclaims, confounds, subdues, or destroys their enemies. With infinite wisdom and almighty power he manages all things in the universe, so that nothing can be of lasting injury to the believer, but must finally result in his good, and everlasting triumph. He rules in Jacob and to the ends of the earth ; establishes his kingdom of Grace in the believer's heart, where he rules and reigns ; subdues all natural opposition ; writes his law, and stamps his own divine image, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

But it is as a Priest, Jesus makes atonement for sin, intercedes for us in heaven, and secures our salvation. It was his propitiatory sacrifice which satisfied the claims of law and justice, maintained the honor of God's moral government, procured pardon, divine favor and eternal life. It is this great atoning sacrifice which relieves the troubled conscience and heals

the broken heart — turns the frowns of Heaven into smiles of love, and the fears of wrath into hopes of mercy. As our great High Priest, and the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, he appears in the presence of God for us, bearing the memorials of his death, and putting the Father in mind of the blessings which he has procured for his people. With constant interest and importunity he there maintains our cause ; as our all-prevailing Advocate he urges his plea in the court of Heaven, and offers the grateful incense of his own merits with the prayers of the saints. “ Him the Father heareth always ! ” It is thus from his sacerdotal character alone that the apostle draws the argument of Christ’s ability to save to the uttermost. He shows a resemblance existing between Christ and the priests under the law, and that in all things Jesus, our great High Priest, has the pre-eminence. He excels in his appointment to office — in the perpetuity of his service — in the holiness and dignity of his person — in the excellence, extent and efficacy of his sacrifice, and in his unceasing and all-prevailing intercession.

By the oath of God he was consecrated a priest forevermore. Not by the blood of legal sacrifices, but by his own blood he obtained our redemption and entered into the holy place. Not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life, he was made a priest after the order of Melchisedec ; who was without father, without mother,

without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life — having no history of his birth and death and public character. Like him, Jesus Christ had no predecessor or successor in office. “He succeeded them as the antitype succeeds the type. But his priesthood was of a different kind. Theirs was a shadow, but his was the truth ; theirs consisted in offering animals upon the altar, but his in offering himself ; theirs diverted temporal punishment from the Israelites, but his has delivered mankind from the guilt of sin and eternal perdition.”

He had no successor in office, but because he continueth ever, “he hath an unchangeable priesthood.” Hence the apostle’s argument : “Wherefore he is *able* also to save them to the *uttermost* that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” Heb. vii : 25. Death made no interruption in the exercise of his office, because it was a principal part of his work as a priest to offer himself a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour unto God. The sacrifices under the law could not take away sin, but Christ has by one offering “perfected forever them that are sanctified.” Heb. x : 14. He made the sacrifice and oblation cease ; the blood of victims flowed no more, and the smoke of altars ascended no more after he appeared once in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. While legal sacrifices were for the Jews only, his death was a sacrifice for men in every age

and clime. "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 Jn. ii: 2. Hence he suffered without the gates of the city of Jerusalem to signify that he is the Saviour, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles.

O, how different! how infinitely more glorious and excellent was his sacrifice than those under the law! It was not of the best of the flock, but it was himself! He made his soul an offering for sin, and redeemed us unto God by his own blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. Legal sacrifices could not take away sin; but he was once offered to bear the sins of many, and when he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. They only delivered from temporal punishment; but he has satisfied the claims of law and justice, delivered us from the wrath to come, and obtained for us glory and honor and immortality beyond the grave.

His priestly office is the basis of all acceptable worship and intercourse, and reconciliation between God and man. He is the minister of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man; and through him as the High Priest over the house of God we may draw near with true hearts in full assurance of faith. Without faith in him we cannot please God, nor obtain pardon and salvation. Once every year, on the great day of atonement, the high priest entered into the

holy place, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people. But Jesus, our great High Priest, offered himself once, and by his death made atonement for sin, and there can be no dispute about the all-sufficiency of his atonement to procure pardon and salvation to the uttermost. "Such is my opinion of its efficacy, that were the guilt of all the millions of mankind that ever lived concentrated in my own person, I should see no reason, relying on that blood which cleanses from all sin, to indulge despair."—(*Dr. Wardlaw.*)

"Were I chargeable with all the vilest deeds which have been committed in every age of the world, by every nation of men, in this most deplorable case I need not sink into despair. Even such guilt, though grievous beyond all expression, is not to be compared with that abundance of grace and righteousness which dwell in the Incarnate Divinity. How great, how transcendently glorious are the perfections of the adored Jehovah! So great, so superlatively precious is the expiation of the dying Jesus, 'tis impossible for the human mind to exalt this atonement too highly — 'tis impossible for the humble to confide in it too steadily. The Scriptures have said it, that the blood on which we rely is God's own blood, and therefore all-sufficient to expiate, omnipotent to save."—(*Jas. Hervey.*)

He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think. His mercy is above the heavens,

and his pity and power are infinite. It would then be a dishonor to the efficacy of his blood to suppose for a moment that it is not *all-sufficient* to wash away the vilest and blackest sins — omnipotent to save to the uttermost. Mr. Hervey, drawing peace and consolation from the atonement of Jesus Christ, says : “ For my own part, I feel no consolation but when this truth is operative upon my mind. When you see me at the great tribunal, you will behold one of the poorest and vilest of sinners made perfectly free from guilt — made whiter than the mountain snow, by the precious blood of Jesus. Let us not dishonor that blood, which is dignified above all things. It is the blood of God’s beloved Son. It is the blood of God’s Fellow. It is the blood of Him who is over all God blessed forever. Surely then, its value must be immense — its efficacy infinite. It must cleanse from all sin, and with a perfection that is matchless and inconceivable.”

Wonderful indeed and infinitely efficacious is the death of Jesus Christ, our great High Priest. It is the most wonderful and important and efficient event in the history of the world. It was long foretold, caused by no accident, disease, or decay of nature, but by *judicial sentence*. It shocked nature, rent the veil of the temple from the top to the bottom, raised the dead to life, and constrained his foes to exclaim : “ Truly, this was the Son of God.” It became the great theme of the apostles’ preaching, and an ordi-

nance was instituted to perpetuate its memory. It is the only ground of hope for the guilty; the only source of peace and consolation; the most powerful motive to mortify sin and devote ourselves to God, and it will be the triumphant and eternal song of Heaven: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." O, who can tell the infinite efficacy of his death and the glories of his Cross! "The Cross of Christ is an object of such incomparable brightness, that it spreads a glory round it to all the nations of the earth, all the corners of the universe, all the generations of time, and all the ages of eternity. The greatest actions or events that ever happened upon earth filled with their splendor and effulgence but a moment of time, and a point of space. The splendor of this great object fills immensity and eternity." It has attracted the attention of Heaven, Earth and Hell in ages that are past. God and his people looked for it for ages before its astonishing advent, and redeemed saints and holy angels will look back on it with transport during all eternity. While the glory of other objects decays through time, this will only increase. "It will be a great part of future blessedness to remember the object that purchased it, and of future punishment to remember the object that offered deliverance from it. It will add life to the beams of love in heaven, and make the flames of hell

burn fiercer. Its beams will not only adorn the regions of light, but pierce the regions of darkness. It will be the desire of the saints in light, and the great eye-sore of the Prince of Darkness and his subjects." Oh, may the death of Immanuel be our life, his Cross our glory, and may his blessed name and boundless love be our everlasting song !

“ He died for us — he made our peace ;
He *pleads* our cause on high ;
Oh ! may our praises never cease,
Hosannas never die !

May each revolving year inflame
Our zeal, delight and love ;
Till round the Throne we chant his name
In purer strains above.

Oh ! come ye servants of the Lord,
His endless praise proclaim ;
In gladsome notes his love record,
For worthy is the Lamb.”

It is not his death alone, but his *intercession*, also, which makes salvation to the utmost of human guilt and ruin. “ Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make *intercession* for them.” This is an essential part of his ministerial office, the object of which is to obtain pardon and final salvation. He prays for his people in every age and clime ; and in the spirit of charity he prayed for his enemies, “ Father forgive them.”

In heaven he appears in the presence of God for us, to plead his all-sufficient atonement as the ground on which the blessings of salvation should be bestowed. He prays that his people may be kept from the evil of sin, and from the Evil One. To each one he says, as he did to Peter : " I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." O, how far would they wander, were it not for these divine prayers, which preserve them amid dangers and fears and frailties, until they are brought to glorious mansions on high ! Our best services are imperfect. They need pardon. Our tears need repentance ; but our persons and services are accepted in the Beloved, through the incense of his merits and mediation. " If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Then the language of our hearts is : " O, Lord God of Hosts, hear my prayer : give ear, O God of Jacob. Behold, O God, our shield, and look upon the face of thine Anointed." " He offers much incense with the prayers of all saints, upon the golden altar which is before the throne ; and the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God." Satan, the accuser of the brethren, brings charges against them before God, day and night. The injured law and conscience may also accuse them ; but Jesus answers all charges. " Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect ? It is God that justifieth : who is he that condemneth ? It is Christ

that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh *intercession* for us." Ro. viii: 33, 34.

Through his intercession our eternal salvation is secured. "I will," says he, that "they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." Thus he prays, and will continue to intercede for them until they are received into glory. The mansions he has prepared for them will be filled with a great multitude, which no man can number, out of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues. There, before his throne, they will for ever behold Him whom they love, rejoice in his presence, and tune their golden harps in honor of his name.

"As Priest, he saves from sin; as Advocate, he brings us to God; as Intercessor, he pleads our cause. As the Shepherd and Bishop of souls, he seeks and saves the lost as well as watches over them when found. As Messiah, he animates us with the Holy Spirit, bestowing gifts on men, even the rebellious, that the Lord God may dwell among them. As Prophet, he teaches the ignorant, and makes the foolish wise unto salvation. As the Captain of our Salvation, he fights our battles, and leads the array against our enemies. As a King, he rules in us and over us, making us more than conquerors over earth and hell; over the power of this ensnaring flesh, with all its deadly lusts which war against the soul; over this

gay, seducing world, with all its pomp and pride and bravery ; over principalities and powers, and all the banded legions of the Prince of Darkness.”—(*John Dick, D. D.*)

Without discussing the manner of his intercession, it is sufficient for our purpose to say, that he intercedes by presenting his sacrifice before the Father, and by presenting himself in our name. “I beheld, and lo ! in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain.” *Re. v: 6.* “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true ; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” *He. ix: 24.* The power of his presence, as a plea before the Father, may be illustrated by the case of two Athenian brothers. The case is this : *Æschylus* was tried for impiety in a certain drama, and condemned to be stoned to death. But his brother *Aminias*, who had distinguished himself as first of the Athenians, and had lost his hand in the celebrated battle of *Salamis*, appeared in court, and, without saying a word, held up his arm deprived of the hand ; and when the judges saw his misfortune, they remembered his deeds of valor, and acquitted his brother. O, how much more will not God acquit us, when he beholds *Jesus*, our Elder Brother, standing in his presence, presenting the memorials of his death, and pleading his merits in our behalf ! He has paid

the penalty of the law, when he stained all his raiment in his own precious blood. His blood speaks better things than that of Abel. The blood of Abel cried for vengeance ; but the blood of Jesus cries for mercy, and speaks more than the tongue of men and angels can possibly utter. As the high priest bore the names of the children of Israel in the breast-plate of judgment upon his heart, when he went into the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually, so when Jesus appears in the most holy place made without hands, he bears on his spirit the names of his people, graven as a signet, and set as a seal upon his heart and upon his arm, as a perpetual memorial before the Lord.

He also intercedes for us by pleading for our sanctification and final glory. He prays, "Sanctify them through thy truth ; thy word is truth." "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." Having the golden censor, with much incense, he offers it with the prayers of all saints, upon the golden altar which is before the throne. This is the pledge of his ability to save to the uttermost — the foundation of our hope and confidence : *He ever liveth to make intercession for them.*

"Stretch'd on the ignominious tree
For those whose hands had nailed him there ;
Who stood and mocked his misery,

He offer'd up his latest prayer :
Then with the voice of victory cried,
'Tis finished, bowed his head and died —

Now by the throne of God he stands,
Aloft the golden censor bears,
And offers, with high priestly hands,
Pure incense with his people's prayers :
Well pleased, the Father eyes the Son
And says to each request, 'Tis done."

SALVATION TO THE UTTERMOST IS EVIDENT FROM THE DIVINE POWER AND GOOD WILL OF THE SAVIOUR. As God, and as the Son of God, he has all power, human and divine, created and uncreated, finite and infinite. This power is inherent, underived, unchangeable and absolute, extending over all his creatures visible and invisible, to continue, change or destroy them according to his pleasure, and for his glory. "By him all things were created that are in heaven and that are in earth visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers; all things were created by him and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Col. 1: 16, 17. In his divine character he is *the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace*; of whom and through whom and to whom are all things over which he reigns by original right and authority. All power and might and dominion belong to Him who is *over all God blessed forever*; the brightness of the Father's glory,

and the express image of his person ; upholding all things by the word of his power. The Scriptures assure us that he is from everlasting to everlasting — that his goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity — that he is the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the Ending — that he made and upholds all things — that he is omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent — that he is and was and is to come, the almighty, self-existent, underrived and unchangeable Jehovah ; the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Jno. 1 : 1.

All power belongs to him not only as God but also as God-man, Mediator. As a reward for his obedience he is invested with universal empire. He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Phil. ii : 9, 11. The Father hath “set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come ; and hath put all things

under his feet, and gave him to be the Head over all things to the Church." Ep. i: 20-22.

He is invested with power to conduct the affairs of the universe for the express purpose of salvation, and for making all things work together for the "establishment, the trial, the purification, the increase, the final triumph and perfection" of the Church which he has purchased with his own blood. He makes all things subserve her interests. Kingdoms rise and fall, generations live and die; the Gospel visits one country and retires to another; angels leave their bright abodes to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation, and like showers that water the earth, the Spirit descends on the souls of men to prepare them for heaven. He has ascended up on high and received gifts for men, which he dispenses as a king on his throne. As Mediator he has power to raise the dead and judge the world. Jno. v: 26-29. Then has he not power to do according to his will? Can he not send the rod of his strength out of Zion, and make himself a willing people? Are not his weapons mighty to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against his knowledge, and bringing into captivity every thought to his obedience? The Roman power which conquered the world, could not hinder the progress and triumph of the Gospel, and can any power hinder Him who exerts over the human heart an influence

which overcomes all opposition, who has the hearts of all men in his hand, and as the rivers of water can turn them withersoever he will. His Spirit and grace operate silently but surely to open the blind eyes — to give a new heart and a new spirit — to make old things pass away, and all things become new — to change the entire man into his own image — to give new views, inclinations, motives, principles and pursuits. He can work in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure ; he can fulfill in us all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power. Certainly, that power which first made all things out of nothing, and which finally makes those things that are not, to be as they were, is able to renew the hardest heart and *save the vilest sinner*. He is able to defend the Church from all her enemies visible and invisible. No weapon that is formed against Zion shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against her in judgment he shall condemn. “Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them ; because greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.” 1 Jno. iv. : 4. The enemies of the Church have fallen successively in every age ; but Zion continues a monument of the power of Him whose kingdom is over all.

This power is given him to accomplish the designs of his death in the conversion and salvation of his people ; and he will exercise it until his enemies be-

come his footstool — until idolatry, superstition and heresy are overthrown — until the redeemed are presented a glorious Church — until the final sentence will be pronounced on the assembled Universe, and all will be consigned to their everlasting abodes. He finished the work which the Father gave him to do, and by finishing it brought infinite power, righteousness, holiness, love and mercy, all on our side. He made reconciliation for iniquity, procured pardon, peace, purification, eternal life, and all the blessings contained in the word Salvation. Now he is exalted a Prince and a Saviour for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. His throne is forever and ever, and his dominion shall extend to the ends of the earth; all kings shall bow to him, and all nations shall serve him and fear him as long as the sun and moon endure; his name shall endure and be blessed forever, and the whole earth shall be filled with his glory. “He is over all God blessed forever.” He has power on earth to forgive sin and quicken whom he will — power to raise the dead, to give eternal life and judge the world. Now when this power, and the names, attributes, acts and relations which Deity sustains to his creatures are ascribed to him, has he not *power to save to the uttermost*? These names, attributes, acts and relations belong to Deity alone, and they involve the possession of absolute power and perfection without limits. “The creation, preservation and government of the

universe ; the giving of life and the restoration of it to the dead ; the forgiveness of sin ; the communication of endless life, and the final judgment of intelligent beings, are the highest, the most peculiar and the most perfect displays of the Godhead ;" all which are ascribed to Jesus Christ, and if they do not prove his *ability to save to the uttermost*, to what proof shall we resort ? Well may the challenge be given : " Is there any thing too hard for the Lord to do ?" Is he not infinitely *able* to save to the uttermost ?

His is the ability of Omnipotence ; the ability of one who has all power in the universe. " It is the ability of one who has shed his precious blood ; who has paid an infinitely precious ransom ; who has laid down an infinitely precious life, in order that salvation might be to the uttermost. It is the ability of one who has accomplished an infinitely glorious work, and thereby made infinite provision for everything that sinners could require. It is the ability of one who has not only mercy and grace upon his side, but righteousness, holiness and truth. Every infinite perfection is now on the side of salvation. A Saviour's death has done this. Before that, they were against it. Nothing, therefore, can be beyond the reach of a Saviour such as this. No sinner on earth — no sinner on this side of hell, can be beyond his power to save. His salvation goes to the very uttermost of human ruin — to the very ends of the earth — up to the very

gate of hell." O, infinite salvation from an infinite Saviour! How precious to the believer! How welcome to him who feels his absolute need! How sweet to my soul is the name of Jesus, who procured it for wretched, dying men! Oh! let not unbelief pervert its promise into tears.

" Salvation! O melodious sound
To wretched, dying men!
Salvation, that from God proceeds,
And leads to God again.

Rescued from hell's eternal gloom,
From fiends and fires and chains;
Raised to a Paradise of bliss,
Where love and glory reigns!

But O! may a degenerate soul,
Sinful and weak as mine,
Presume to raise a trembling eye
To blessings so divine?

The lustre of so bright a bliss
My feeble heart o'erbears;
And unbelief almost perverts
The promise into tears.

My Saviour God, no voice but thine
These dying hopes can raise;
Speak thy salvation to my soul,
And turn its tears to praise.

My Saviour God, this broken voice,
Transported shall proclaim,
And call on the angelic harps
To sound so sweet a name."

Jesus is *willing* as he is able to save. He came to do the will of Him who sent him, and delights to do that will. But God's revealed will is that "all men should be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth." 1 Tim. ii: 4. This will is the rule of our faith and practice. Hence if Jesus came to do his Father's will, and that will is that all men, irrespective of their condition and moral worth, should be saved, he is perfectly willing to save sinners to the uttermost of human guilt and ruin. His own words and actions are a practical proof of this declaration. His great errand into the world was to save men. For this end he both died and rose again. For this he ever lives to make intercession for them, and declares: "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Then would it not be an impeachment of his divine character and veracity to say that he is unwilling to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him? Hear his lamentation over that devoted city where he did so many mighty works, and death itself fled afrighted at his presence: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children, and *ye* would not!" Mt. xxiii: 37. "There is a certain truth in this maxim: Christ will not save any who will not serve him. It is however equally true that his willingness to save us does not begin only when we begin to be willing to serve him. Our good will

does not originate his good will. He is willing before we are, and even whilst we are unwilling. How often would I have gathered you, was the Saviour's appeal to his worst enemies, even when they would not come to him that they might have life. It is not, therefore, a precarious or encumbered willingness to save us that Christ feels in his heart and proclaims in his Gospel ; it is a natural, noble, glorious willingness, flowing freely from all the fountains of his love and power, and intended to win our good will to his salvation and service. It is therefore as much our duty to believe that Christ is *willing* to save us as that he is *able*. We cannot please God without believing this. It is a sin to doubt it for a moment. It is just as true that the Saviour is infinitely *willing*, as that he is infinitely *able* to save unto the uttermost all that come to God by him ; and therefore it is neither humility nor modesty to doubt what is thus equally true. Let then our faith fix as firmly on his good will as it does on his great power. We never doubt his power to save us ; we never think it humble or modest to suspect him for weakness. Why then for unwillingness ? It is as much a stranger to his heart as weakness is to his hand."

SALVATION TO THE UTTERMOST IS EVIDENT FROM THE CHARACTER OF THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN SAVED. Jesus has saved the chief of sinners, and his power is undiminished. Their lives are recorded that we through

patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Among these are found, some before and some after conversion, renewed to repentance and saved — as Adam, whose sin brought the curse of Jehovah on his posterity, and ruined the world; drunken Noah, incestuous Lot, Rahab the harlot, David, Solomon, the Israelites, Manasseh, Mary Magdalene, Matthew the publican, Zaccheus the extortioner, Peter and Paul, the incestuous Corinthians, the idolatrous Ephesians and the murderers of our Lord. Lot and Peter are instances of relapses into the same sin; the Israelites and Solomon of repeated acts and long continuance in sin; Mary Magdalene and the Corinthians are examples of unchaste and scandalous sinners, and also the publicans and harlots. Manasseh and Paul, and the murderers of Jesus Christ, are instances of the chief of sinners, who, under conviction of sin, sought and obtained salvation. Paul says “he was a blasphemer and a persecutor, and injurious — persecuted the saints unto the death — persecuted them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities. But I obtained mercy; the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant. Howbeit, for *this cause* I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long suffering for a *pattern* to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.” 1 Tim. i : 13, 16. Manasseh was guilty of

every thing that was bad — guilty of the greatest sins, for which no sacrifice was provided under the law, and against which there was express authority that those guilty of them should be put to death, especially the idolator, the murderer and those who sacrificed their children to idols and consulted evil spirits. He sold himself, like Ahab, to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, and destroyed, as far as possible, the true religion by raising up altars unto Baal, making groves and worshiping all the host of heaven. He profaned the house of God with idols and sacrificed his children to idols, was in league with Satan, and observed times and used enchantments and witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit and with wizards; shed much innocent blood — the blood of the saints and prophets, of fathers, and mothers, and children. He did much evil in the sight of the Lord like the abominations of the heathen, and caused God's people to sin even worse than the heathen; and after his sins he would not hearken to divine admonitions and reproofs — worse than the abominations of the heathen: among which were idolatry, adultery, fornication, incest, sodomy, and all manner of sin. These are some of his sins, and yet after all, "he sought the Lord and obtained mercy." 2 Chron. xxxiii.

Now, who need despair of pardon and salvation to the uttermost? Your case may not be like Manasseh's, Noah's, Lot's, David's, the Corinthians, and oth-

ers ; but for *all sorts of sins* and *sinners*, there is *forgiveness* with God and *salvation* by Jesus Christ ; and there are those in heaven who have been guilty of such sins, and yet have been washed and saved through the merits of the Saviour. He is able to save to the uttermost. His power to save extends to all who come to God by him : it is limited only by those who refuse to come. This refusal seals their ruin. Oh ! then come without delay, and without first attempting to heal your souls, and save yourselves. Come, whoever you are, and whatever your sins are — your unworthiness, your vileness, and hardness of heart — come, and you shall be saved. Come in faith and love, relying on the merits of Immanuel. Bring your afflicted souls, your hard hearts and troubled conscience to the compassionate Saviour, and you shall find rest, peace and joy. There is an all-sufficiency in Christ Jesus — enough, and to spare. God is waiting to be gracious, and “is more pitiful to help men under sin than under affliction, because the guilt of one sin is greater misery than the burden of a thousand crosses.” Look at yourselves, and look from your sins to the Saviour. When you think of your sins, think also of the ransom which has been paid for them. Look at but one of these characters we have mentioned, and be encouraged to come unto God by Jesus Christ. David, guilty of horrid and complicated crimes, inflamed by aggravating circumstances

with regard to God and himself, and his neighbor irreparably injured in his most dear and tender interests, becomes penitent, is pardoned and saved ! All horrible and execrable as his offense was, it is nothing to the superabundant merit of our glorious Redeemer. Washed in His blood, he is "fairer than the full-blown lily, whiter than the new-fallen snow."

"Come, my fellow sinners, try,
Jesus' heart is full of love !
O, that you as well as I,
May his wondrous mercy prove.
He has sent me to declare,
All is ready, all is free ;
Why should any soul despair,
When he saved a wretch like me ?"

Come, sinners of every kind, and let us praise God for laying help on One who is mighty to save, and so making salvation to the *uttermost*. O, what depths of love ! what riches of grace are displayed in the salvation of sinners ! Almighty God, enable us to come from the extremity of sin and ruin to thee by Jesus Christ, and experience the riches of thy grace and the power of thy love. Lord Jesus, make us a willing people in the day of thy power. Set thy throne in our hearts and reign there. Cast out of thy sight in the far country of sin and want, enable us to look again toward thy holy temple ; weary and heavy laden with the greatest burden of sin, enable us to come to

thee for rest, relying on the infinite merits of thy Blood. Almighty Saviour, who engaged alone in the conflict with death and hell, and triumphed over all thine enemies, turn us from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Deliver us from the bondage of all our spiritual foes — send thy Spirit to renew our hearts — thy word to heal our souls, and thy angels to minister to our salvation. Give us spiritual life, liberty, health and beauty. Invested with dominion over all thy creatures, animate and inanimate, visible and invisible, thou hast healed all manner of disease among the people — fed the multitudes — hushed the winds — stilled the waves — controlled the elements — overthrown the banded legions of the Prince of Darkness, and raised the dead to life by a touch, or a word. Oh, do thou exert thy almighty power in our souls, speak the word only, and we shall be healed ; bring all our powers in subjection to thy divine will, and feed us with the bread of life unto life eternal. Make us trophies of thy grace and power to save to the uttermost ; make our bodies the temple of the Holy Ghost, that by his sanctifying operations he may enact his own work of grace in our hearts ; fill our minds with divine truth, elevate our affections above the world, and bear our souls on to God and to glory. Clothe us with thy perfect righteousness and with the full panoply of God. Enable us to receive thee with our whole hearts in the arms of faith and

love, in all thy offices and fullness as “of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” Grant us the spirit of prayer, and fill us with all the fullness of God. Oh, set us as a seal upon thy heart and upon thy arm, and as the great High Priest of our profession, and our Advocate with the Father, ever plead our cause before his eternal throne.

“ Jesus ! plead my cause in heaven ;
Be my Advocate on high ;
All the praise to thee be given,
Through a vast eternity.”

“ ’Tis Jesus pleads his people’s cause
Before the eternal throne,
Presents the merits of his love,
And claims them for his own.
Oh ! for a lively, vigorous faith
To feel this blessing mine,
Make me, Oh Lord, of saving grace
A monument divine.
Father ! behold me in thy Son ;
Oh, send thy Spirit down
To fit me for eternal joys,
And seal me for thy own.”

V.

ALL INVITED TO SALVATION.

“ Poor worldling ! stay thy vain pursuit of peace
In empty vanities ; no good can live
In all the gilded charms that mock thee ; cease
Thy hold on these ; loose every cord, and hear
The voice of God : Come ye that weary are !
Ye heavy-laden, come, and I will give
You rest. O, heed that call ! in holy fear,
In deep humility bow down. The Star
Of Hope shall rise, and joy shall speak thy soul’s release.”

LOOK from the delusive charms of earth to the joys that are above, for true and lasting peace. Come to Jesus, who has obtained rest for the weary, and the Star of Hope will rise in your souls. Before the last great day, when that star will rise no more, “ Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.” Behold him now, while he calls with a voice of tenderness and love. Now, in the fullness of divine compassion, he cries from his throne of mercy : “ Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.” Then, from his throne of judgment he will pronounce the final doom of the assembled Universe ! Now, he stands with arms of mercy extended to receive every

true penitent. Then, he will shut the door of mercy against all who disregard his entreating voice. Then, everlasting joy and triumph will be obtained by all who now obey the Gospel, and eternal sorrow will overwhelm those who always turn away from the voice of mercy and all the transcendent glories of the Cross.

Life and immortality are brought to light through the Gospel. The claims of the injured law are satisfied, and the legal obstacles in the way of salvation are removed by the Son of God, so much neglected and despised in every age and clime by sinners whom he came to save. He has obtained eternal redemption for us, but it must be applied to our souls before we can enjoy its infinite and eternal blessings. Jesus, in all his divine fullness and excellence, is freely offered to us in the glorious Gospel. It is daily preached to obtain our consent, melt our hearts and engage our affections in the blessed Saviour, represented by words and actions in all the glories of Gethsemane and tortures of Calvary ; and although, to their everlasting sorrow, some may reject so great a Saviour, yet may we have grace to receive him in faith and love, as the Father's unspeakable gift to us, and rely on his infinite merits for justification and acceptance with God — submit to his will in all things, as the angels in heaven, and render him that homage which is due to his great name. May we believe on him to life everlasting, and look steadfastly unto him until we lose sight of our-

selves both as to our state and our experience — both as to what we are and what we do. The moment we look away from him to ourselves, we will fall into doubts and darkness, but by keeping the eye of faith on him we will feel that he is our Saviour, and we will not believe because we feel, but feel because we believe. We may also believe and not be entirely conscious of it, or have a sensible assurance until we awake in the light of eternal day, as we are not conscious of respiration, in sleep, until we awake from our slumbers. Faith is expressed by metaphors borrowed from nature. Hence we speak of the eyes of the understanding — of seeing an argument — of looking unto Jesus — coming to him — receiving him — resting and believing on him. By the union of soul and body, our looks often discover the state and frame of our minds. The eye is a mirror by which are seen the various emotions of the mind; and by a silent, yet significant language, those internal exercises, which the tongue cannot always express, are discovered. Hence a look of surprise, of joy, of sorrow, of pity, of pain and want is understood, even by a child. So, looking to Christ, expresses our regard for him, our importunate desires, and expectation of deliverance by him; our dependence on him for salvation, and our submission to his authority — our approbation of him as our Saviour, and our joy and gratitude for all his infinite mercies. He invites us to look to him and be saved. Isa. xlv: 22.

THE INVITATION IS GIVEN TO ALL WHO HEAR THE GOSPEL—to the young and the old in sin—to the comparatively holy, and the notoriously wicked. It is irrespective of age, or sex, or condition, or nation. It is broad as the sentence of the law, which includes all sinners, and declares, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” It includes sinners of every degree of guilt—the whole human race—all the ends of the earth—

—“A rebel universe !

My species up in arms ! not one exempt.

Yet for the foulest of the foul he dies,

Most joyed for the redeemed from deepest guilt !

As if our race were held of highest rank,

And Godhead dearer as more kind to man.”

The invitation proceeds on the all-sufficiency of the atonement. By virtue of it, we are authorized to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. In the beautiful language of Isaiah, God says of his only-begotten and well-beloved Son : “I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayst be my salvation unto the end of the earth.”

Isa. xlix: 6. And now the Son himself cries, in the same exalted and inviting strains : “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.” “Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” “The Spirit and the Bride say, Come, and let him that heareth say, come ; and let him that is athirst

come ; and *whosoever* will, let him take the water of life freely." Re. xxii: 17. "Wisdom crieth in the top of high places — at the gates — at the entry of the city — at the coming in at the doors : unto you, O men, I call ; and my voice is to the sons of man." Pr. viii. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, if *any* man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." Jn. vii: 37. O, what encouraging invitations are these to a lost world ! In what pathetic tones do they come from a compassionate Saviour to perishing sinners ! With what inexpressible joy do they fill the believing soul ! When the venerable and devout Simeon saw the child Jesus, he took him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said : "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word ; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people : a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." Here is salvation prepared for *all people* — Jew and Gentile, barbarian, Scythian, bond and free, male and female. "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Jn. iii: 16. "The grace that invites makes no exceptions, but welcomes the unworthiest. It would fain allure the seekers of vain joy from joys that are so vain. It would fain win the heart of the sorrowful, who mourn, and yet have no comforter, because they

have no God. It would fain draw in the secure into a place of true safety, ere the storm arise that is to break in pieces the strong foundations of the earth." O, disconsolate sinners ! take courage from these invitations, which include the whole human family. Your conditions in the world and in sin may be various, yet you are invited. You may be in prosperity, or in adversity ; in health, or in sickness ; in hoary age, or in blooming youth — you may be a parent, or a child protected under a parental roof, or, wandering, exposed to the mercy of an unfeeling and selfish world — you may be earning your bread by the sweat of your face, or rocked in the lap of luxury and ease — you may be black, or white ; men of genius, and learning, and fame, and power, or entirely the reverse — you may be professors, or profane, long in the way of sin, or just entering the broad road that leads to death — you may be grave, or prude and gay, amiable or petulant — your sins may be few or many, and aggravated exceedingly — your guilt and demerit may be widely different, — yet none, nor all of these things exclude you from the free invitations and infinite blessings of the Gospel. Jesus invites all — invites you as sinners ready to perish, needing salvation. As no merit is required to commend us to God, so no demerit excludes us from his favors. As there is nothing in the nature of the Gospel to exclude any sinner, so there is nothing in any sinner — nothing

that he has done, is, or may be — to exclude him from the Gospel call.

To the shepherds of Bethlehem the angel of the Lord came with these encouraging words : “ Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to *all* people ; for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord ; and suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising and blessing God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” LU. 2. These tidings are to all people. The invitation excludes none, but embraces all. Then let all look and be saved.

“ Let every mortal ear attend,
And every heart rejoice,
The trumpet of the Gospel sounds
With an entreating voice.

Ho, all ye thirsty, starving souls,
That feed upon the wind ;
And vainly strive with earthly toys
To fill an empty mind.

Ho, ye that pant for living streams
And pine away and die ;
Here you may quench your raging thirst
With springs that never dry.

Rivers of love and mercy here
In a rich ocean join ;
Salvation in abundance flows
Like floods of milk and wine.

The gates of Gospel grace
Stand open night and day ;
Lord, we are come to seek supplies,
And drive our wants away.”

THE INVITATION IS EXPRESSLY TO ALL WEARY AND HEAVY LADEN SINNERS. While the sinner sleeps in spiritual death, his sins are no trouble to him. But when aroused from his deep slumbers by the wrath of Jehovah, and the gnawings of a guilty conscience, he feels his sins to be a burden greater and heavier than the sand of the sea, or mountains of brass. He feels the guilt of one sin to be a burden greater than the weight of ten thousand crosses. The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity ; but a wounded spirit who can bear ? The man of Uz, who feared God and eschewed evil, and who was the greatest of all the men of the East, bore all his earthly losses and bereavements without a murmur. In the spirit and language of holy resignation he said : “ The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.” But when the arrows of the Almighty stuck fast within him, the poison whereof drunk up his spirits, and swallowed up his words, he chose death rather than life, and longed for his departure — even that it would please God to destroy him — that he would let loose his hand and cut him off. *Job, vi.*

In reality, troubles caused by sin alone deserve the name. Compared with them all others are light — our

light affliction which is but for a moment. The Scriptures express them by waters coming into the soul ; by water-spouts ; by wave succeeding wave, and billows passing over the soul ; by sinking in deep mire ; by a loathsome disease ; by roaring day and night ; by wrath lying hard on the sinner and the terrors of God sticking fast in him ; by a body of death ; by the sorrows of hell compassing the soul, and by many such similes ; and yet, language fails to express the burden and bitterness of sin. Like fire it consumes the bones, brings the sinner down to the dust of death, to the horrors of despair and to the pit of everlasting woe. He feels that he has sinned against a holy, righteous and merciful God — against the clearest light, the purest love, the most signal mercies ; and after solemn vows and engagements, and now in the bitterness of his soul he cries : “ My hope is gone — the Lord will be favorable no more — in anger he has shut up his tender mercies — I must perish — the invitations of the Gospel are not to me ! ” But stay, desponding and despairing sinner. Be not hasty in your conclusions. This invitation is even to *you*, weary and heavy laden with sin — to you who have wandered far from God, and gone to the very *extremity* of sin and ruin ; down to the very gate of hell. Cast out of God’s sight, look again toward his holy temple. In unbounded love and infinite mercy he cries to you : “ Look unto me, and be ye saved.” “ Come unto me

all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." *Jno. vi: 37.* I invite the scarlet-colored and crimson-dyed sinner, whose sins are without number, and in their enormity and aggravations have reached the very heavens: "Come, now, and let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." "Hearken unto me ye stout-hearted that are far from righteousness." "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Yea, the invitation is given in the form and solemnity of an oath. "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die." "Thou hast made me serve with thy sins; thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities. I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." *Isa. xliii: 24, 25.* Is not this language sufficient to move the sinner's heart and bring him to God, who is merciful and gracious, long-suffering, slow to anger, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, and "who will have all men to be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth."

1 Tim. ii: 4. Sin has made you poor and destitute, but I

command my servants to go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, the maimed, the halt and the blind. Go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in that my house may be filled. Go out quickly, the case admits of no delay. Go out and bring in hither sinners of all classes and grades. By the force of truth, and the sweet promises of the Gospel, compel them to come in. Search out the lost sheep — bring back the prodigal.

“O, Israel, return unto the Lord thy God, for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity.” “Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers, yet return again to me, saith the Lord; I will heal your backslidings”—I will love you freely. “Even from the days of your fathers, ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of Hosts.” *Mal. iii : 7.* Then say, Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God. Weary and heavy laden sinner, look and be saved. The established order in the kingdom of grace is, “Ask and it shall be given you.” The promise here made is unconditional and absolute, and you may look with confidence for the blessing promised. Others as vile as you have asked and received — have sought and found — have been washed and saved. Oh, then, come to the Saviour — come to that fountain

which he has opened for sin and for uncleanness, and your sins shall be made white as the mountain snow.

“ There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel’s veins ;
And sinners plung’d beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoic’d to see
That fountain in his day ;
And here have I, as vile as he,
Washed all my sins away.

Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its pow’r ;
Till all the ransom’d Church of God
Be sav’d to sin no more.

E’er since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.

Then in a nobler, sweeter song,
I’ll sing thy pow’r to save,
When this poor lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave.”

You may be the chief of sinners, or of backsliders, yet come and say : “ It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.” Remember, God “ never yet put out a dim candle that was lighted at the Sun of Righteousness.” He never sent away destitute any poor penitent sinner.

Your great and numberless sins cannot be an obstacle in the way of coming to him. "Whatever our guiltiness be, yet when it falls into the sea of God's mercy, it is but like a drop of blood fallen into the great ocean." Every one, without exception, whatever his former character has been, who is enabled to believe in Jesus Christ, shall certainly be saved. "The number, or aggravations of his sins do not alter the case; and the reason is, the sinner is not received into favor, in whole or in part, upon the account of anything personal, but solely and entirely upon the account of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Now, this righteousness is perfectly equal to all the demands of the law, and therefore, when this righteousness is made over to the sinner as his by imputation, the law has no more demands upon him for great sins than for small — for many than for few; because all demands are fully satisfied by the obedience of Jesus to the law. You see that sinners of all characters, who believe in him, are put upon an equality in this respect. They are all admitted upon one common footing — the righteousness of Christ; and that is as sufficient for one as for another."— (*Davies.*) While the Gospel excludes from the kingdom of heaven the impenitent fornicator, idolator, adulterer, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, and extortioners, yet it receives even such vile sinners on faith

and repentance. "And such were some of you ; but ye are washed ; but ye are sanctified ; but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." 1 Cor. vi: 9-11. Then, whatever be your character and your sins, you are expressly and earnestly invited to come to Jesus Christ for rest to your souls.

" Come, ye weary, heavy laden,
Lost and ruin'd by the fall !
If you tarry till you 're better,
You will never come at all.
Not the righteous—
Sinners, Jesus came to call."

THE INVITATION IS FREE TO ALL SINNERS OF EVERY GRADE IN THE HUMAN FAMILY. It is free to the poor as well as to the rich — to the vilest of the vile as well as to the decent and respectable among men. No merit, no previous qualification is required to render us proper subjects of the Gospel call. Its cheering language is : "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters ; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat." "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." "Ye have sold yourselves for naught, and ye shall be redeemed without money." Isa. lii: 3. "I will *give* to him that is athirst, of the fountain of the water of life freely." The invitation is, then, free as the flowing stream — the light of the sun, and the mountain breeze.

The truth of this proposition is clearly taught by

the remedy that was provided in the camp of Israel for all who were stung by fiery serpents. Moses was commanded to make a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole, "that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live." He did so: "And it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."

Nu. xxi: 8, 9. The remedy was infallible in every case; and is not this a significant type of Jesus, who "was lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life"? Jn. iii: 14, 15. Is he not lifted up in the Gospel for all who are stung by Satan, the Old Serpent, and are writhing in torture amidst misery and death in every variety of form, and crying for deliverance from their pains? Yes, he is lifted up for all who are thus wounded, and he invites them to look to him as the only and all-sufficient remedy for their painful and bleeding wounds.

" Wounded by Satan's fiery fang,
The bleeding, helpless sinner lies;
He writhes and wrestles with the pang
Of hell, and if unaided dies.
That aid the felon-Cross can give:
Look, dying sinner! look and live."

Wounded to death and racked with pain, cast your eyes to the compassionate Saviour. "One look at the brazen serpent was enough to relieve the most desperate case. Nothing in the patient, nothing which he

had done, or had been, or then was, could prevent his cure, provided it did not prevent him from looking. No merit was required for an efficacious look. The bad and the good might equally enjoy the privilege. That they were bitten was no prevention, but the very reason why they ought to look. In like manner faith in Christ will heal the vilest sinner that ever descended from Adam. There is nothing in any man — nothing which he has done, has been or is, which can prevent his cure, provided it does not prevent him from looking. No merit is required, nor any one virtue but what is involved in an operative faith. That men are sinners is no prevention. It is the very reason why they ought to look.”—(*Griffin.*)

The thief on the cross, Zaccheus the extortioner, and Saul of Tarsus, had no previous qualification — no merit when they looked and lived. Nor has any sinner anything of his own to commend him to God. “What hast thou that thou didst not receive?”

1 Cor. iv: 7. The terms of salvation are low and easy: *no merit, no money, no price.* Then, unworthy, guilty and wretched as you are by sin, look even from the ends of the earth, and from the gate of hell, to the Man of Calvary and live. Look to the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, and be saved.

There was no other remedy in the camp of Israel for those who were writhing in torture by the fangs of the fiery serpent, but to look to the brazen serpent

and live. Nothing else would avail. So there is no other remedy now for us but to look to Jesus for everlasting life. There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, than the name — Jesus; and since the invitation is free, none has any reasonable excuse for not looking to him for salvation. To encourage you and dispel all unbelief, he assures you by his infallible word that he will not reject you. “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out” — no, in no wise. Though your sins are very great — though vile and numberless beyond conception — though you are the greatest sinner and the poorest among men, and your case the most desperate. It is as easy for him to save a great sinner as a small one. None was ever saved because his sins were small, nor rejected because they were great. His blood cleanses from all sin; and with infinite perfection. “Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound?” Your sins may be like mountains great — you may have treasured up wrath against the day of wrath, and wearied God by long continuance in sin, yet vile and sinful as you are look to Jesus and be saved. Manasseh repented in old age; God hires laborers in his vineyard from early in the morning to the eleventh hour of the day, and thus includes the young, and the old in sin. The thief on the cross prayed “Lord remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom;” and Jesus, in the fullness of divine com-

passion, returned the gracious and soul-thrilling answer, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

The Gospel does not exclude you from looking, or coming to Christ. In it God has set before you an open door, which none has a right to shut, and which none can shut except by unbelief. This is all that excludes the sinner from heaven, as it excluded the Israelites from the land of promise. "They could not enter in because of unbelief." He. iii: 19. If you are old in years and old in sin, you have no time to delay or hesitate; enter in at the strait gate without delay, for your day will soon come to an end. While in the body the overtures of mercy are made; and "while the lamp holds out to burn, the vilest sinner may return." Oh, then return while Jesus with outstretched arms of mercy invites, and promises he will in *no wise cast you out*. Return speedily with all your heart; take him at his word, and venture your eternal life on it. While he holds out the golden sceptre of mercy, touch it and live. If you stay away you must perish; if you come you can only perish; but none ever perished at his feet. You may feel the hardness of your heart and the great demerit of your sins, you may abhor yourself as utterly unworthy of the least favor, yet come to Him who came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance, and to save them, even the chief. Were you not vile and sinful, Jesus would not be suitable to your wants; and the

more miserable and helpless you are, the more need you have to come to him for pardon and all the blessings of his grace. Here is the living fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness — opened in the Divine purpose — in the promises, types and prophecies of the Old Testament, and in their fulfillment. It stands open in the preaching of the Gospel, and would you wash in the nitre and soap of your own righteousness to render you fit to wash in this pure and living fountain? would you heal yourself, and then call a physician? How absurd! Is not a deep sense of your need, a true sense of your vile, wretched, and helpless condition your best fitness?

“ Let not conscience make you linger,
Nor of fitness fondly dream;
All the fitness he requireth,
Is to *feel* your need of him.”

As a prodigal who has wasted his substance and feels his utter want, arise and go to your Father in heaven and say: “ Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants.” “ O save me, I perish!” “ God be merciful to me a sinner!” “ O, thou Son of David, have mercy on me!” “ Lord that I might receive my sight.”

Did you once believe you were a Christian, and on the strength of this belief make a profession of reli-

gion ; and have you since fallen even deeper in the mire of sin than before your profession ; and now do you say there is no hope — you cannot be renewed again to repentance — his mercy is clean gone forever ? But is not this your infirmity ? Remember it is not *falling* in the mire, but *lying* there that destroys you. So it is not falling into sin, but *continuing* in it that destroys the soul. It is not impossible with *God* to renew you to repentance, because nothing is impossible with him, which is not contrary to his nature, and he has renewed others who have fallen by their iniquity and denied the Lord that bought them, as Peter and his own long favored people. Therefore, in your fallen and backslidden state of sin and misery, look to him and be saved. Obey the voice of mercy saying : “Return, O backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you.” “O, Israel, return unto the Lord thy God, for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity ; I will heal their backsliding ; I will love them freely.” God has received and pardoned great sinners and backsliders, and their lives are recorded that others may not despair, but through patience and comfort of the Scriptures may have hope.

Jesus is ready to receive you under a sense of your sins and wants ; and you need no better evidence that you are of those he came to save than your willingness to come to him for all the blessings of grace

and glory. In nothing is God more glorified than in your conversion and final salvation. Yea, there is joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth. He never rejected any true penitent, and none need hesitate about coming to him with the assurance of being made perfectly welcome.

The invitation is made to you as sinners, and every sinner has God's warrant to receive Jesus Christ with all the precious blessings of salvation. Oh, come, for Christ is in your offer; hear, and your soul shall live. Away with captious and insidious objections, and listen to the voice of Jesus while there is hope, and while he stretches out his hand to receive and save you from sin and endless woe. From his throne of grace he freely offers all the blessings of everlasting life, and all things are ready for your reception and enjoyment in mansions of bliss supreme and eternal.

Oh, what joyful and welcome tidings are these to poor perishing sinners! As cold water to a thirsty soul, and as pardon to a condemned criminal, so are the tidings of salvation to the weary and heavy laden sinner, condemned at the bar of God and of conscience. They are always joyful news — they never lose their relish by age, or repetition — they are as sweet, free, full and consolatory now as they were five thousand years ago. Oh, hear the voice of God calling in the Gospel to sinners of every kind and degree of guilt, "Look unto me and be ye saved." Who can tell his

wondrous love thus displayed to fallen man ! Even the angels, who chant his praise around his Throne, can neither express nor conceive the greatness of that love which passes all finite knowledge. God alone knows it. But we know it is adequate to our wants, and embraces every sinner who comes to God by Jesus Christ. Then let every one come speedily, with all his heart, looking to Jesus, and escaping for his life before the flames of eternal fire shall overtake him.

“ Stay, sinner, on the Gospel plains,
Behold the Son of God unfold
The glories of his dying love
Forever telling — yet untold.”

The great errand for which Jesus came into this world was to save sinners. Then come to him, poor lost sinner, and salvation is yours. He assures you that he will not cast you out. “ No degree of previous guilt ; no inveterate habits of vice ; no slavery of Satan ; no secret decree of God ; no involuntary mistake ; no feebleness in coming to Christ would induce him to reject a single person who applied to him, for the salvation of his soul, with a sincere desire to obtain the blessing ; depending on his truth, power and grace, and using the means of his appointment.” Then do not hesitate to come when all your manifold sins may be blotted out, and your soul be everlastingly saved.

“This is a free invitation to every weary and heavy laden sinner, made by Him who alone is able to take away the load of guilt and sin. Every person under the pressure of sin, not only may, but must come to Jesus, thus laden with guilt, if he hopes to succeed for pardon. While we endeavor to prepare our way by holy qualifications, we rather fill it with stumbling-blocks, whereby our souls are hindered from attaining to the salvation of Christ. Christ would have us to believe on Him, who justifies the ungodly ; and therefore he does not require us to be godly before we believe. He came as a physician for the sick, and does not expect they should recover their health in the least degree before they come to him. The vilest sinners are fitly prepared and qualified for this design, which is to show forth the exceeding riches of his grace, pardoning our sins, and saving us freely. It is no affront to Christ, or slighting, or contemning the justice and holiness of God, to come to God while we are polluted sinners ; but rather, it is affronting and contemning the saving grace, merit and fullness of Jesus, if we endeavor to make ourselves righteous and holy before we receive Christ himself, and all holiness and righteousness in him by grace.” Then be persuaded to come as sinners ready to perish. It is the very situation in which Christ receives sinners. In the sight of God your unfitness is no unfitness at all ; but the very reason why you should come ; and

the worse you are, the greater reason you have for immediate application to Christ, and the more dangerous is delay.

“ Ho ! every one that thirsts, draw nigh,
(’Tis God invites the fallen race ;)
Mercy and free salvation buy,
Buy wine and milk, and Gospel grace.

Come to the living waters, come !
Sinners, obey your Maker’s call ;
Return ye weary wanderers home,
And find my grace is *free for all*.

See from the Rock a fountain rise ;
For you in healing streams it rolls ;
Money ye need not bring, nor price,
Ye laboring, burden’d, sin-sick souls.”

THE INVITATION IS MADE IN ALL SINCERITY — IS OFTEN REPEATED — COMES FROM THE HIGHEST AUTHORITY, AND IS AFFECTIONATELY URGED. The unspeakable gift of God’s only-begotten Son is a sure evidence of his sincerity ; and all that Jesus has done and suffered for us, is an evidence beyond all dispute that he is sincere in calling us to obtain salvation through faith in his blood. Yea, it would be an impeachment of the infinite rectitude of God’s character to suppose for a moment that he is not sincere in his offers of mercy to us.

The language of the Father and of the Son to perishing sinners is full of tenderness and love. In

regard to them they pathetically exclaim : “ O, that they were wise ; that they understood this ; that they would consider their latter end ! ” Oh, that these unwise and thoughtless sinners would pause and consider the final doom of all who, running on in sin, hate God and their own souls, and love death. “ O, that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways, I should have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto him, but their time should have endured forever. He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat ; and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee. ” “ How shall I give thee up, Ephraim ? how shall I deliver thee, Israel ? ” “ Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die ? ”

In what tender strains does Jesus lament over that rebellious people, who set at nought God’s counsels and despised his reproofs ! When he came near Jerusalem, “ He beheld the city and wept over it, saying : If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace ! But now are they hid from thine eyes. ” *Lu. xix: 41, 42.* O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem — how often would I have gathered thy children together — and ye (rulers) would not ; but would cast out of the synagogue all who would confess me before men. *Jn. ix: 22.* To his

servants he says, "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind"—"Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled;" LU. XIV: 21-23. and his servants in the spirit and language of their Master cry, "We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

The invitation comes from Jesus, himself, who is invested with power over all things in the universe, visible and invisible, for the redemption, the preservation, the purity and final glory, of all who receive his proffers of mercy. To him every knee must bow—all nations must do him service, and before his face the earth and the heaven shall flee away, when he will appear in his unrivaled glory. That glory will shine with increasing splendor, when we remember it is the glory of our Redeemer, and our Advocate with the Father, and who shines in heaven with supreme and eternal splendor.

The glory of God and of the Lamb is the light of the New Jerusalem. All the beams of glory and blessedness emanate from him who, clothed with light as with a garment, appears in the presence of God for us. Now you may trifle with the invitations of an enemy, or of a man like yourselves; but can you trifle with the authority and kind invitations of our glorious King and Saviour? By no means. Remember it is

the voice of him who made the world with all its glory — who spoke us into existence, and who died for our sins, that calls “Look unto me and be ye saved.” Angels worship him — all nature obeys his laws — and shall man only disobey his entreating voice? Remember he will pronounce the final sentence on countless millions, in the last great day of *dread decision* and *despair*. Now, he sits on his throne of grace and scatters the richest blessings on mankind; then, on his throne of judgment he will say to the righteous: “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.” But to the wicked he will declare these fearful words: “Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels.” Then, all must obey his voice, and we must mingle with the crowd in that great and terrible day of the Lord. As he comes in the clouds with power and great glory, every eye shall see him, and they also that pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. What a glorious and joyful sight will his advent be to those who now regard his invitations; and how full of sorrow, dread and despair will it be to all who disregard them! Now, he who calls bears the gracious character of a Saviour; then, he will be clothed with the majesty of the Supreme Judge of the world. How great the change! In what different tones will his words fall on the ears

of an assembled universe waiting in dread suspense to hear their final doom !

For us he humbled himself, even to the dust of death, and endured all the torture which rage and malice could devise and inflict, until he expired on the cross, amidst the mingling cries of the multitude and the apparent signs of nature, in the pangs of death. And after all this, will we not regard him saying : “ Behold me — behold me — come unto me — look unto me and be ye saved.” Shall we always find something else to look at besides Him, who is fairer than the children of men — even the brightness of the Father’s glory, and who is the Lord our Righteousness, in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. The angels and saints in heaven gaze with rapture on him, as the source of their bliss and joy ; and shall not we, ruined and helpless sinners, look to him for pardon, glory, honor and immortality beyond the grave ? Shall we look with admiration on the beauties of nature and exclaim :

“ Beautiful Landscape ! I could look on thee
For hours, unmindful of the storm and strife
And mingled murmurs of tumultuous life —
Here all is still as fair —

And will we not look up from nature to nature’s God ? will we not look to Him who has made all these beauties which are only faint reflections of his glory ? And

is there nothing in the Saviour to command our attention? Is he not fairer than his own works and altogether lovely, and will not his unbounded and everlasting love, as it is manifested in bearing the enormous load of wrath due for our sins, constrain us to look to him while he cries, "Look unto me and be ye saved." What have I suffered for your redemption, and will you not receive me, nor regard my voice, but cast reproach on my name? "Reproach hath broke my heart, I am full of heaviness, and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none." "Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate." "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" O, what language is this to fall from the lips of the Saviour! Nature could not behold his sufferings, and hear this cry without emotions of pain and sorrow; and can we stand unmoved and unconcerned before such stupendous displays of nature and of grace? Oh, look up to Him who is fairer than these heavens—see him on his throne of glory, wearing the crown of his espousals and swaying the sceptre of the universe, and hear the redeemed cry, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing"—"Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and domin-

ion forever and ever, Amen." He is the centre of attraction in the courts above, and should be the same in all below. He is the only Saviour. Besides him there is no other. Men and angles are not able to save us ; they cannot satisfy the claims of law and justice ; renew our hearts ; subdue our lusts ; sanctify our nature, and conduct us in safety through the dangers of this sinful and ensnaring world, to the realms of glory and honor, and immortality. Neither can we save ourselves by any means, and if we do not look to Christ Jesus, to whom can we look for salvation ? In vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains, or any other source, except from the Lord our Righteousness. "Call now, if there be any that will answer thee, and to which of the saints wilt thou turn ?" Job, v : 1. There is no alternative. Neither is there salvation in any other. Truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel. His power is infinite and uncontrollable. None can hinder him from doing what he has said. Whom he blesses, they are blest ; and whom he curses they are cursed. He limits the power, controls the rage, and baffles the schemes of the powers of earth and hell ; he turns the king's heart as he pleases, and none can pluck out of his hand. Then look to him and be saved. Trust ye in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.

“ To thee I look, my only Lord ;
On thee my trembling soul depends.
Blest Saviour ! speak the healing word ;
Thy pard’ning mercy never ends.

Then will my heart o’erflow with joy,
My life proclaim its grateful praise,
Till safe in bliss, without alloy,
My soul shall chant celestial lays.”

He urges this duty on us by the strongest *motive* — SALVATION. What stronger motive can be presented to a rational mind ? It includes the blessings of grace and of glory. Were some distinguished prince to invite you to a sumptuous feast, or proclaim liberty to you from the most abject slavery, or pardon for a criminal offense, or offer a kingdom and crown, would you not, with transports of joy and gratitude, accept the proffered blessing ? And will you not look with joy and gratitude to the Prince of the kings of the earth, who freely offers you a blessing of infinitely greater value — who proclaims freedom from the bondage of sin and liability to eternal death — offers you a kingdom which cannot be moved, and a crown of glory that fadeth not away — and invites you to a royal feast of Gospel grace and glory, where your soul would be satisfied as with marrow and with fatness, and where you would finally drink of the Water of Life, and eat of the Tree of Life in the midst of the Paradise of God ? O, what a gift — what a powerful

motive to a rational and immortal being — deliverance from sin — admission into Heaven !

Sin has exposed us to the curse of the law, proclaiming death to every soul that doeth evil, and exposed us to the loss of earth, and of heaven with all its joys and felicity. Without salvation, we have no title to heaven, or anything good, and must pine away in misery supreme and endless. We are subject to tortures of conscience ; to the frowns of Heaven — to be cut off from the earth, and driven to the doleful regions of horror and despair, without a ray of hope left to dispel the dismal gloom. But salvation by Christ brings us a complete remedy — gives deliverance from all our woes — secures the Divine favor, and a sure title to all the ineffable joys of heaven. Then shall we not *look and be saved* ? What a change would then take place in our state before God, and in our joys, and sorrows, and prospects for eternity ! What toils and conflicts do we now undergo for the affairs of this world, and will we not even look to Jesus for the salvation of our souls ?

“ Sinners, hear the Saviour’s call,
He now is passing by ;
He has seen thy grievous thrall,
And heard thy mourning cry.
He has pardons to impart,
Grace to save thee from thy fears ;
See the love that fills his heart,
And wipe away thy tears.

Raise thy downcast eyes, and see
What throngs his throne surround !
These, though sinners once like thee,
Have full salvation found.
Yield not then to unbelief,
While he says, there yet is room ;
Though of sinners thou art chief,
Since Jesus calls thee home."

It is the duty of all, in every age, and condition, and clime, to turn their eyes from beholding vanity, and look to Jesus, who came into the world for the best of all ends—the glory of God and the salvation of man. Behold him in his original glory—in his humble birth—distinguished life—peculiar death—signal triumph, and final glory. Behold him as the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, and brings us salvation. It is vain to look elsewhere for this infinite blessing. Through Jesus Christ, God has made ample provision for the salvation of a lost world. Then offer no vain excuse for not obeying his voice. The excuses which sinners offer are drawn from the affairs of this life—from husbandry, merchandise, and other pursuits, and pleasures and enjoyments ; but they are trivial, unsatisfactory, and insufficient to save them from the doom denounced by an offended Sovereign against the disobedient: "None of those men that were bidden shall taste of my Supper."

The blessings offered are infinitely important and

precious—they are procured at an infinite price—are adapted to our wants, and will sustain us under all the ills of life, and follow us beyond the grave. They are complete salvation—Christ in all his fullness, and heaven with all its glory. O, that we could feel an earnest desire for these blessings, and abandon everything inconsistent with them! O, that we could feel our extreme want, and perishing condition without them, and with gratitude, cheerfully accept them as the gift of God to us! Consider what is the state of men before receiving these blessings. They are represented as *outcasts and beggars*, lying in the streets and lanes of the city, in the highways and hedges of the country. O, what a pitiable condition! poor, maimed, halt, blind in the streets, and lanes, and highways and hedges, without a covering, without a couch, without sustenance and without a friend! Alas! this is the melancholy condition of men with regard to the eternal world, until they accept the blessings of salvation. They are poor and destitute of all good in God's sight, however they may appear before men—destitute of the Holy Spirit and his graces, and divine favor—of knowledge, righteousness and holiness, of light, life, liberty, peace and joy. O, what a destitute and deplorable state! Poor, maimed, halt, blind as to spiritual things—the way of salvation—the beauties of holiness—the deformity of sin and their own wretched condition!

What astonishing condescension on the part of Jehovah is contained in the invitations of the Gospel ! What amazing, what transporting sounds to perishing sinners ! God might justly leave us in our sinful and miserable state. But in the greatness of his love and mercy, he invites us to look and be saved — he invites us into his society — into the arms of his favor, and to the possession of the richest blessings in his gift.

He invites the most impenitent, the most polluted and debauched, the most destitute and helpless — publicans and harlots, drunkards, thieves, extortioners, and chief of sinners of every name. Many will come from the north, south, east and west, and receive these untold blessings ; and with transports of joy will sing their triumphant song of deliverance. And will you not come with that happy number and swell the chorus of their praise ? Salvation and all the joys of heaven are in your offer ; and if you continue to spurn these blessings, how great will be your loss and your anguish of heart in the great and terrible day of the Lord ! Oh, come, ye disconsolate — come, ye that weary are — come, ye that have no money — come, ye prodigals and outcasts, who have gone far in the way of sin, down to the very gate of hell, and been knocking for admission there — come, ye princes, nobles, judges of the earth — come, *whosoever* will, for Christ invites you and will in no wise cast you out. Oh, may God take no denial but overcome you by arguments

and invitations — by the operations of his Spirit on your hearts — by a sense of your extreme want — by his authority, love and mercy — by the freeness and fullness of salvation — by the meekness and gentleness of Christ — by the labors and toils of his life — by the agonies of his death — by the warnings of conscience — by the joys of heaven and the pains of hell, and by everything dear and sacred to man. O, come without delay and with all your heart. Long enough you have refused, loitered and hesitated. We pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God *now*. Soon the number of the redeemed will be gathered into the kingdom of heaven, the ministry of reconciliation will be finished, the servants recalled, and the door of heaven shut against all who know not God, and obey not the Gospel. Obey that Gospel now. Come in faith and love to Jesus without delay, and he will give you eternal rest in those mansions which he has prepared for all the children of light. One saving view of those splendid mansions would more than compensate for all your toils and privations in coming to the compassionate Saviour. There you would behold him in his original glory, adored by a countless multitude of admiring saints and angels. There your sorrows would have an end, and there would begin your song of everlasting joy and triumph amidst the splendors of the immense and eternal kingdom of Jehovah.

VI.

DIFFICULTIES OF SALVATION.

“ Lo ! round the throne, a glorious band,
The saints, in countless myriads stand ;
Of ev’ry tongue, redeemed to God,
Array’d in garments wash’d in blood !

Through tribulation great they came ;
They bore the Cross, despis’d the shame ;
But now, from all their labors rest,
In God’s eternal glory bless’d.”

THE way to heaven lies through a vale of tears. Toils and trials attend the believer on his journey to that far and better country, where God has prepared for him a habitation. Jesus says to his people : “ In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” Then arise ye, and depart, for this is not your rest. There remains a rest for the people of God beyond the confines of time. Before you lies a most delightful country, enlightened by the glory of God and of the Lamb, and perfumed with the fragrance of the Spirit wafted on every breeze. But you must endure toil and conflict before entering that glorious land of rest, where you shall sit down under the shadow of the Tree of Life

and find his fruit sweet to your taste, and where you shall be amply rewarded for all the sorrows of the way. Jesus drank of the brook in the way, and for this cause lifted his head on high; and you must drink of the same brook, and be baptized with the baptism wherewith he was baptized, before you are crowned.

As in the natural, so in the spiritual world, no great enterprise is accomplished without some trouble; and the greater the enterprise the greater is the difficulty attending it. A victory was never achieved in the field of battle, nor a nation redeemed from bondage without some difficulty. How true is this of the redemption of the soul! It was not obtained without extreme toil and suffering. To obtain eternal redemption for us Jesus lived a most laborious life, and suffered in his body and in his soul, the wrath of God due for sin. In the garden of Gethsemane, and on the Cross of Calvary, his soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death; yet in dying he conquered, triumphed over every foe, and removed every legal barrier in our way to God and to glory.

But there are difficulties peculiar to man which now demand our attention. The natural man finds a difficulty in his plan of salvation arising from the CLAIMS OF THE LAW. His plan is to obtain salvation by the covenant of works, couched in these words: "Do and live." He goes about to establish his own righteous-

ness and inquires : "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord ? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings ? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression ? Or, "shall I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and give my body to be burned ?"

This way of the natural man seeking happiness is exemplified in the history of one who came to Jesus and said : "Master, what good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life ?" Jesus said : "If thou wilt enter into life keep the commandments." He replied : "All these have I kept from my youth up, what lack I yet ?" Then, to show him the spirituality of the law, and how far he had failed to meet its claims, Jesus said unto him, "if thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me." When the young man heard that saying he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions ; and though he was not far from the kingdom of heaven, and though for his amiability Jesus loved him, yet he went away sorrowful, because for his supreme love to the world, he could not make a sacrifice which the law required. Alas, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God !" How vain is it to seek salvation by the deeds of the law ! how easily is man deceived by his own self-righteous spirit !

The law requires universal, sincere, constant and perfect obedience, and all who expect salvation by it,

must render this unqualified obedience : because it cannot lower it claims to accommodate human weakness. It is a transcript of the moral nature of God, written on the tables of the human heart, from which it has never been entirely erased by all the ravages of sin : “ For when the Gentiles who have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law ; these having not the law, are a law unto themselves : which show the work of the law written in their hearts.” Rom. ii: 14, 15. It is perpetually binding on all men in all ages, and under all circumstances ; and he who offends in one point is guilty of all. Even the impure desire, the wanton look, is a violation of its spiritual nature, and exposes the transgressor to its dreadful penalty. Its claims must be satisfied, or the great Lawgiver hurled from his throne, and anarchy reign throughout the world. Its golden rule is, “ All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.” Mt. vii: 12. Its sum is supreme love to God, and sincere love to man. “ Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind ” — and “ Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Mt. xxii: 37-39. In our Lord’s memorable sermon on the mount, he said : “ Love your enemies ; bless them that curse you ; do good to them that hate you ; and pray for them who despitefully use you and persecute you.” This indeed is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.

The law extends not merely to the external conduct, but reaches the thoughts and intents of the heart. Hence, malice in the heart is murder in the sight of Heaven — covetousness is idolatry. “I had not known lust except the law had said, thou shalt not covet.” Alas ! who has not broken its holy precepts ? Who dares hope for salvation by its deeds ? Since Adam, made upright after the Divine image, consisting in knowledge, righteousness and holiness, cast the crown from his head and failed to obtain eternal life by the law, can any of his fallen race with a nature divested of its original glory, weakened and depraved by sin, reasonably hope to resist all temptations to evil ; and obtain salvation in the way by which he utterly failed ? By no means. Do not the Scriptures assure us that all have gone astray ; that all the world is guilty before God ; and that even in the best, there is a law in their members, warring against the law of their minds, and bringing them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members. Ro. vii: 23. How then can man be just before God and obtain salvation by his own feeble and imperfect efforts ? Let the history of the young man who came to Christ, inquiring what good thing he must do that he might have eternal life, satisfy the strict moralist and the self-righteous Pharisee, who as touching the righteousness of the law is blameless before men, that his hopes of salvation in this way, are utterly vain and fallacious.

The external observance of the law does not meet its high and holy claims. Reformation of life will not atone for past offenses, nor will deeds of charity and benevolence procure salvation. The gate of heaven is too narrow to admit on his own merits any man who has failed to keep the law perfectly in all its extent and spirituality. The testimony of Scripture is clear on this point: "What things the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." Ro. iii: 19, 20. "If thou Lord shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?" "Enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." Ps. cxxx, cxliii. "For if righteousness come by the law, then is Christ dead in vain." "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." Gal. ii: 21; iii: 21. Now must not every one despair of salvation by the law? Does not the unrenewed man here find an insuperable difficulty? and will he not come to the same conclusion to which Paul came, who, as touching the righteousness of the law was blameless in the eye of man, and in his own Pharisaic estimation? "I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died, and the commandment which was ordained to

life I found to be unto death." Ro. vii: 9, 10. Alas! how many like Paul, before his conversion, and like the young man who would do some good thing to have eternal life, are seeking salvation by the law, and so deceiving themselves!

“ Go, ye that rest upon the law,
And toil, and seek salvation there;
Look to the flames that Moses saw,
And fear, and tremble, and despair

But I'll retire beneath the Cross —
Saviour, at thy dear feet I lie;
And the keen sword that Justice draws,
Flaming and red, shall pass me by.”

Blessed be God, that Jesus has removed this difficulty, which no finite creature could remove, and so made salvation easy by the law of faith! Oh, may it be given to us in behalf of Christ to believe on his name! He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. He has satisfied its claims, magnified the law and made it honorable. He has made atonement for sin, and to him alone we must look for salvation. He is our refuge from the storm, and from the rain; our hiding place from the wind and covert from the tempest. “For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk

not after the flesh but after the Spirit." Ro. viii : 3, 4.
Oh, let us fly to Christ for refuge, for righteousness
and for salvation, as to the shadow of a great rock in
a weary land. He was smitten for us as the rock in
the wilderness was smitten for the Israelites, and "that
Rock was Christ." 1 Cor. 10 : 4.

" Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee ;
Let the water and the blood
From thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

Not the labors of my hands
Can fulfill thy law's demands ;
Could my zeal no respite know ;
Could my tears forever flow ;
All for sin could not atone,
Thou must save, and thou alone."

The natural man finds in himself another difficulty arising from the NECESSITY OF REGENERATION. He must be born again before he can enter Heaven. But how can this new birth be effected. He is spiritually dead, and can the dead perform the functions of the living? Can he change his own heart? "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." Jer. xiii : 23. Nothing less than entire change of heart will avail anything before God. "Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but

a new creature.” Gal. vi: 15. The declaration is positive and absolute: “Except a man be born again — born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the Kingdom of God.” Jno. iii: 5. Neither legality, nor natural religion is of any avail. He must have a supernatural principle of grace implanted in his heart. Christ must be formed in him the hope of glory; and he must be in Christ before he can be a new creature. Old things must pass away, and all things become new. There must be a new principle of life and action, new desires, motives and ends.

O, let us see to it that we are the subjects of this great, and mysterious, and important change! Has the Spirit which first moved upon the face of the waters, moved on our hearts and formed them after his own divine image, and breathed in us the breath of immortal life? And when this life languishes, let us cry, “Come from the four winds, O Breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.” Ez. xxxvii: 9.

Regeneration is essential for admission into Heaven. “Marvel not that I said unto you, ye must be born again.” About eighteen hundred years ago, this doctrine was the wonder; and is still the wonder and ridicule of an ignorant and unbelieving world. They do not understand it any more, than they understand how the “wind bloweth where it listeth.” “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know

them, because they are spiritually discerned.” 1 Cor. ii: 14. This language is figurative : but as by our first birth, we become men ; so by the second we become Christians — partakers of the divine nature — heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. We are made after his likeness, and bear his image. We have the nature and disposition of children, and though yet imperfect, we grow up to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. All the principles of the divine nature are implanted in the soul, in the act of regeneration, but they are not brought to perfection until sanctification is completed.

The change produced in the soul by regeneration is : *supernatural, instantaneous, universal, mysterious, progressive and abiding*. Hence it is said of the subjects of the new birth : “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever.” 1 Pt. i: 23. “Born not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” We are saved by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

How great, how mysterious, and how all-important is this change from death to life — from darkness to light — from heirs of hell to heirs of heaven ! Man’s natural state is deplorable, helpless and loathesome. “You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.” Ep. ii: 1. “If any man be in Christ Jesus he

is a new creature ; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new." He has put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. He loves, obeys and serves God, in whom are all his delights, joys and triumphs. He loves his people, word and ordinances, and all that is lovely and of good report. He delights in the law of God after the inner man — loves his law because it is holy, just, and good in its nature and tendency. He delights in communion with God, esteems his favor life, and his loving-kindness better than life. Jesus is to him the chief among ten thousands, and altogether lovely ; his yoke is easy and his burden is light ; and he longs and prays to be with him that he may behold his glory. Being clothed with humility, and having on the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price, he disclaims all righteousness of his own — all sin appears exceeding sinful to him, and it melts his heart to think he has so long and so wickedly rebelled against the God of all grace and comfort. He mourns over sin as committed against a sin-pardoning God, and longs to be delivered not only from its *power* and *pollution*, but also from its very *existence*. "O, wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?" He is not satisfied, like the nominal professor, with the external forms of religion, but exerts all his powers in the active and faithful discharge of all its duties. Having

experienced the sweet influences of the Gospel of peace, he delights in drawing near to God, and strives to enter in at the strait gate, resolving, at all hazards, to save his own soul. This Christian experience will soothe the sorrows of affliction, alleviate the ills of life, the pressure of poverty and pains of persecution. It will give a relish to a dry morsel, dispel the horrors of a dungeon, and console the exile from his country and his friends. Although the "flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh," yet the change is mysterious and entire. Old things have passed away, and all things become new ; a new principle of life and action is formed in the soul — new joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, desires and aversions, likes and dislikes, views, motives and ends. He is renewed in the whole man after the image of Him who created him.

The change is supernatural, produced in the sinner only by Divine power, making him God's workmanship — husbandry — building. "Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." *Jn. i: 13.* "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures." *Ja. i: 18.* We are born of the Spirit ; saved "by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." *Tit. iii: 5.* Human nature is so weak and depraved, that without divine aid it has neither power nor inclination for this change.

But the Spirit convinces the unrenewed man of sin and his need of conversion — of the divine holiness — of the purity of the law — of the penalty annexed to its violation, and of his exposure to divine displeasure, and thus arouses him from his carnal security. He becomes uneasy and anxious, and attempts reformation of life ; and when convinced that this is not sufficient, the Spirit opens his eyes to see the state of his soul, and that mere reformation will not remove the great difficulty and renew his heart. He convinces him of his utter inability, and of his absolute need of divine power to make him holy. At last he falls down at the footstool of mercy as a poor, wretched, anxious and helpless sinner. In that low state God pities him, breathes into him the breath of spiritual and immortal life, creates in him a clean heart and renews in him a right spirit, and he becomes a living soul — a new man brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty, even the glorious liberty wherewith the Son makes us free. It excels all other liberty as far as light excels darkness, or wisdom excels folly. It is liberty which the world can neither give, nor take away.

“ But there is yet a *liberty*, unsung
By poets, and by senators unpraised,
Which monarchs cannot grant, nor all the powers
Of earth and hell, confederate, take away :
A *liberty*, which persecution, fraud,

Oppression, prisons, have no power to bind ;
Which, whoso tastes, can be enslaved no more.
'Tis *liberty* of heart, derived from Heaven,
Bought with His blood, who gave it to mankind,
And sealed it with the same token."

There are difficulties peculiar to the Christian in traveling the narrow way which leads to life. They arise from the DUTIES HE MUST DISCHARGE — THE WARFARE HE MUST WAGE — AND THE TRIALS HE MUST ENDURE. His duties are personal and relative, public and private, civil and religious. He must know the God of his Fathers, and serve him with a perfect heart and a willing mind — must love his word, and ordinances, and people — seek the peace, and prosperity, and extension of Zion — do to others as he would that others should do to him — forbear, and forgive, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us — do good to all men, especially to them that are of the household of faith — deny himself, take up his Cross, and follow the Lamb through evil as well as through good report — "love God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind, and with all his strength ; and his neighbor as himself." Mk. xii : 30, 31. He must be diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Many and arduous are his duties ; and to encourage him in discharging them, Jesus has promised to reward the faithful with a crown of life. Even a cup of cold water, given in the name of a disciple, shall in no

wise lose its reward. "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase ; so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." PR. iii : 9, 10. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

1 Tim iv : 8.

Such encouraging promises inspire the Christian in the discharge of all known duties ; but his difficulty lies in *rightly* discharging them. Every one will sustain me in saying, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Each one can say with Paul, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing : for to will is present with me ; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Ro. vii : 18. His soul often cleaves to the dust : his own natural diffidence often overcomes him. The frowns of an ungodly world—the waywardness of his own heart—the high and holy claims of the Gospel, which requires us to love our enemies, bless them that curse us, do good to them that hate us, and pray for them that despitefully use and persecute us—the extent and variety of the law, the spirituality of its precepts, and the constancy and perpetuity of its obligations—all increase the difficulty. All, more or less feel a difficulty in rightly discharging their respective duties. The great Apostle of the Gentiles, viewing the arduous and responsible labors of the ministry, exclaimed,

“Who is sufficient for these things?” With him, the humble Christian also says, “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.” “I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me.” He knows that his great strength lies in God, who bestows his Spirit to help our infirmities in the discharge of religious duty. How encouraging are these animating words of Jesus ! “There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the Gospel’s, but he shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, and in the world to come, eternal life.” Mk. x: 29, 30. Then, Christian, gird on your armor ; be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might ; have respect to the recompense of the reward, and keep in view your glorious crown.

“ *Soldiers* of Christ, arise
And put your armor on,
Strong in the strength which God supplies,
Through His eternal Son :
Strong in the Lord of Hosts,
And in His mighty power ;
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts,
Is more than conqueror.

Stand then in His great might,
With all His strength endued ;
But take, to arm you for the fight,
The Panoply of God :

That having all things done,
And all your conflicts pass'd ;
Ye may o'ercome through Christ alone,
And stand entire at last."

The Christian has a WARFARE TO WAGE against all his foes. The flesh and the Spirit — depraved and renewed nature — the old man and the new — depravity and grace are at war. In him is the company of two armies. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other." Gal. v: 17. "A man's foes shall be they of his own household." *Innate depravity* is the worst of all foes. It betrays us into the hands of those that are without. It is always present in every place, and in every employment. It keeps the mind ignorant of divine things, and full of the vanities of the world. It keeps the heart insensible of sin, of the glories of God, of the beauties of holiness and the vast importance of eternal things. It alienates the heart from God and his service ; inclines it to sin ; renders it impatient of restraint ; subjects it to passion, vanity and ungovernable lusts, and appetites eager for gratification. It unfits and indisposes for duty. Hence the ignorance, carelessness, carnal security, false hopes, impenitence, opposition to the Spirit, contempt of the Gospel and neglect of salvation, which prevail among men. Hence the luke-warmness, formality, earthly-mindedness, sensuality and love of pleasure. Hence

the inconstancy of many professors ; their relapses into sin ; and the difficulty of arousing them to a just sense of their condition and their duty ; and hence so many sinners perish utterly and eternally, even under the droppings of the Sanctuary. The great majority of men never surmount these difficulties at all, and even the Christian finds it above and beyond his own strength.

The remains of depravity cleave to him, and render his life a warfare, and his progress slow and difficult. He finds a law in his members warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin, preventing him from doing the good that he would do. *Ro. vii.* This law of sin checks his aspirations for God ; cools his devotion ; restrains his courage ; ensnares his thoughts and affections, and exposes him to temptation. Even after light and confidence, it involves him in darkness, jealousies and tears ; deprives him of the comfortable presence of God, and causes him to go mourning without the light of his countenance. Only for this he would go smoothly, and always find the way of wisdom pleasant and peaceful. But this law lies hard on him, renders his course difficult, and makes him cry, “ O, wretched man that I am ! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? ” Those who know nothing of this difficulty, are strangers to experimental religion. The Scriptures and experience prove its reality. In our

flesh, naturally prone to evil and averse to good, dwells no good thing. Even when the power of sin is broken, the remains of depravity are often strong and violent. It is like a mighty man, waking out of sleep, who has gained strength by his slumbers. Overcoming it, is compared to cutting off a right hand, and plucking out a right eye. It is called crucifying the flesh, and destroying the lusts which war against the soul. Its destruction is like death by crucifixion, lingering and painful. This constant warfare of the believer, whose heart has been touched by the renewing Spirit of God, is tersely described by Pollok, in his *Christian contest*.

“ What seest thou here ? what marks’t ?—Observe it well :

Will, passion, reason, hopes, fears, joy, distress ;

Peace, turbulence ; simplicity, deceit ;

Good, ill ; corruption, immortality.

A temple of the Holy Ghost, and yet

Oft lodging fiends ; the dwelling place of all

The heavenly virtues — charity and truth,

Humility, and holiness, and love ;

And yet the common haunt of anger, pride,

Hatred, revenge, and passions foul with lust ;

Allied to heaven, yet parleying oft with hell ;

A soldier listed in Messiah’s band,

And yet giving quarter to Abaddon’s troops ;

With seraphs drinking from the well of life,

And yet carousing in the cup of death ;

An heir of heaven, and walking thitherward,

Yet casting back a covetous eye on earth ;

Emblem of strength and weakness ; loving now,

And now abhorring sin ; indulging now,

And now repenting sore ; rejoicing now

With joy unspeakable and full of glory ;
Now weeping bitterly, and clothed in dust.
A man willing to do, and doing not ;
Doing, and willing not ; embracing what
He hates, what most he loves abandoning.
Half saint, and sinner half — half life, half death ;
Commixture strange of heaven, and earth, and hell.”

But the Christian has also to contend with *external* foes — with the Prince of Darkness and his banded legions. They form a powerful alliance, and leave no artifice unturned. The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. The Christian stands against the wiles of the Devil ; he wrestles against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world — against spiritual wickedness in high places. He must fight the good fight of faith — war a good warfare — enter the strait gate, and walk in the narrow way which leads to life. Like persons who storm a castle, he must encounter difficulties, brave dangers, and maintain resolution and courage, before he receives an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The way to glory is beset with thorns and enemies ; but heaven will make ample amends for all the difficulties and discouragements of the way.

“ ’Tis there forever I shall dwell
With Jesus in the realms of day !
When I shall bid these fears farewell
And he will wipe my tears away.

Jesus, on thee our hope depends
To lead us on to thine abode ;
Assured our home will make amends
For all the toil upon the road."

While in the body, the world throws a barrier in our way. Riches, honor and pleasure spread their charms and tempt us to the pursuit of flying shadows, to the neglect of the one thing needful. Under their influence the voice of God and of conscience is not heard, the interests of the soul are neglected, God and eternity, heaven and hell are forgotten — out of sight, out of mind. The lust of avarice, ambition and sensuality is gratified, and the realities of eternity are disregarded. Amid the allurements of wealth, pleasure, honor and fame, the Christian finds it hard to keep his mind fixed on the great concerns of his soul ; he often feels his heart estranged from God in the paths of sin, his devotion cooled and his soul discouraged. "He finds it hard to maintain a heavenly mind in such an earthly region — a spiritual temper among so many carnal objects." The vain and filthy conversation of the wicked ; their example, persuasions, reasonings, reproaches, forms and arts of flattery, discourage, ensnare, and sometimes overcome him. The multitude yields without resistance to these temptations — to a base and servile conformity to the world — adopts an easy and fashionable religion — travels on the broad road and is ruined. But the Christian must war against

all these foes — against the example and influence of the ungodly — against the odium they cast on religion and the persecutions they inflict on the righteous, whom they count as the filth of the world, and of whom they speak all manner of evil falsely for Christ's name sake. What resolution, courage and fortitude must Christians exercise when they are counted as sheep for the slaughter, and are “made a spectacle to the world, and to men, and to angels!”—their goods spoiled, their bodies burned and their names cast out as evil. They have no rest in the enemy's country. “Without are fightings, within are fears. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.” 2 Cor. iv: 8-10

The different conditions of life present difficulties. The Psalmist was envious at the foolish when he saw the prosperity of the wicked, and could not tell why they have no bands in their death until he went into the Sanctuary of the Lord and learned their dreadful end. Ps. lxxiii. Prosperity and adversity have their temptations. By the one our hearts are often alienated from God, and feel unwilling to leave the momentary pleasures and possessions of this world. By the other they are broken and dejected, and sometimes

entertain hard thoughts of God—even that he writes bitter things against us, and makes us possess months of vanity. Prosperity slays the simple and tempts many to engage in vain speculation, regardless of God and eternity, until they are pierced through with many sorrows, or drowned in destruction and perdition.

The society of the world and the inconsistent conduct of many professors, whose walk and conversation are neither edifying, nor as become the Gospel, make the Christian conflict fiercer and more difficult. What joy does this conduct afford to the enemies of the Cross! What sorrow does it bring to the faithful followers of the Lamb! “Many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the Cross of Christ.” The more the Christian converses with the world, the less he converses with God. Even Seneca, a heathen, said: “I never bring so good a temper out of company, as I carried into it.” The soul of righteous Lot was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked, as the soul of the Rev. James Hervey was grieved at the conversation of certain professors. Being once asked why he so seldom went to see the neighboring gentlemen, who yet showed him all possible esteem and respect, he answered: “I can hardly name a polite family where the conversation turns on the things of God. I hear much frothy and worldly chit chat, but not a word of Christ, and I am determined not to visit those

companies, where there is not room for my Master as well as for myself. I have often found pleasure in visiting the poor tenants of the meanest hut, where I had an opportunity of talking on heavenly things; how much more should I be delighted in an admission to your company, where I should hear the same favorite topics discoursed on, with all the refinements of politeness and superior sense. The chief of my visits are among the serious poor, who give me leave to talk of Christ's righteousness and salvation; or else to a few ingenuous clergymen, who are pleased to honor me with their acquaintance and improve me by their conversation." Though long assured of future happiness, yet to the end of life this eminent servant of Jesus Christ had to contend with his foes. His last audible words were, "The conflict is over—precious salvation!"

Satan and his legions take advantage of everything which tends to beguile and injure the Christian. They have all the relics of angelic power and wisdom combined, are artful, active, and malicious and experienced. Their name is legion, for they are many. Their attacks are incessant, insinuating and ensnaring. They inflame the lusts and appetites of depraved nature, banish serious thoughts from the mind, and fill it with trifles. Destitute of any possessions, they offer the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them to all who will pay them homage. That he may destroy

Christians and sift them as wheat, Satan is transformed into an angel of light, and presents himself in their devotions before the Lord. Hence the exhortation, "Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the Devil, as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour." 1 Pt. v: 8. "Therefore put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil. Fight under the banner of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, who has prevailed and destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the Devil, and delivered them who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Be faithful unto death and you shall receive a crown of life. In view of all these enemies how difficult is salvation ! how painful, yet how honorable is the Christian warfare ! how infinitely glorious is his reward !

"What seest thou here ? what mark'st ? — A battle field ;
Two banners spread ; two dreadful fronts of war
In shock of opposition fierce engaged —
God, angels, saw whole empires rise in arms ;
Saw kings exalted ; heard them tumbled down ;
And others raised — and heeded not ; but here,
God, angels, looked ; God, angels, fought ; and Hell
With all his legions fought ; here error fought
With truth ; with darkness light ; and life with death ;
And here, not kingdoms, reputations, worlds,
Were won — the strife was for eternity ;
The victory was never-ending bliss ;
The badge, a chaplet from the Tree of Life."

The Christian has TRIALS TO ENDURE. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." 1 Pt. iv: 12. Nay, it would be strange were there no trials in your way to honor, and glory, and immortality. The Captain of our salvation obtained the crown by way of the cross, and says to us: "If they have persecuted me they will persecute you also." "Because ye are not of the world but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." In this world the wicked have their good things; they have no bands in their death; are not in trouble, nor plagued as other men; and "because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God." But the righteous have waters of a full cup rung out to them; are plagued all the day long and chastened every morning. Ps. lxxiii. The afflictions of the just are many in number. For their love to Jesus they have endured trials of cruel mocking and scourging; yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment. "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy; they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens, and caves of the earth." He. xi. "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, therefore are they

before the throne of God." *Rev. vii: 14.* They have endured trials of persecution and of apparent desertion. The spirit of persecution has raged against the Lord and his Anointed, and his people, until their history has been written with their own blood. It raged in Egypt — at the Red Sea — in the wilderness — in the land of promise — in the time of the Saviour and the apostles — in the persecutions of the heathen and of Antichrist, and it still rages in the bosom of the world. Every weapon which infernal rage could forge has been brought against the Church. Without she has been assailed, within corrupted, betrayed, deserted. The history of the Church, or of the individual believer, is one of trials — of alternate cloud and sunshine — now displaying their banners in the name of the Lord — now dragging those banners in the dust — now on the borders of Canaan, inhaling the spicy breezes wafted into the desert from that land which flowed with milk and honey — now turning back into the howling wilderness with their faces toward Egypt — now on the mount of transfiguration — now passing under a cloud — now walking in the light of God's countenance — now mourning in the valley of desertion. Zion said: "The Lord hath forsaken me, my God hath forgotten me." "My Beloved had withdrawn himself and was gone; I sought him but could not find him; I called him but he gave me no answer." Again: "I found him whom my soul loveth, I held

him and would not let him go." Song, v: 6; iii: 4. David said: "Lord, by thy favor thou hast made my mountain to stand strong; thou didst hide thy face and I was troubled." Ps. xxx: 7. Job could once say in the language of assurance: "I know that my Redeemer liveth." But again in the valley of desertion he exclaimed: "O, that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat!" "O, that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me, when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness; as I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle, when the Almighty was yet with me, when my children were about me." Job, xxix: 2. In their troubles they resolve to wait on the Lord for deliverance. "But I will look unto the Lord. I will wait for the God of my salvation. My God will hear me." Mic. vii: 7.

One of the greatest difficulties of the believer often consists in determining his true state before God — in knowing assuredly that he has with the heart believed unto righteousness. Until this question is favorably determined, "the peace of God which passeth all understanding" will not arise in his soul. "Until my interest in Christ be ascertained, the spring may bloom, the summer shine, and autumn swell with fruit; but it will be winter, cheerless, gloomy, desolate winter in my soul."

The full assurance of faith, or the evidence that we have believed, is not always granted the believer until the close of life ; and even then it may be felt only with his parting breath, and manifested by the smile which plays on his lips. For wise reasons, God often long withholds this assurance, on which our comfort so much depends. Perhaps we are too worldly and unfit for so great a favor ; or we might abuse it, turn it into self-righteousness and count it a part of our justification. Perhaps it is withheld for our correction, or for the trial of our faith, that we may depend on God for daily supplies, as the Israelites depended on him for manna in the wilderness. “ When he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold.” “ Though now for a season if need be ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations, that the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honor, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” 1 Pt. i: 6-9. Through all these trials the Christian often passes, and through Jesus finally overcomes them all.

“ While thus, within, contending armies strove,
Without, the Christian had his troubles too :
For as by God’s unalterable laws,
And ceremonial of the heaven of heavens,
Virtue takes place of all, and worthiest deeds
Sit highest at the feet of bliss ; on earth
The opposite was fashion’s rule polite.
Virtue the lowest place at table took,

Or served, or was shut out ; the Christian still
Was mocked, derided, persecuted, slain :
And Slander, worse than mockery, or sword
Or death, stood nightly by her horrid forge,
And fabricated lies to stain his name,
And wound his peace — but still he had a source
Of happiness, that man could neither give
Nor take away : the avenues that led
To immortality before him lay —
He saw with Faith's far-reaching eye, the Fount
Of Life, his Father's house, his Saviour God,
And borrowed thence to help his present want."

The believer has his difficulties, yet God is good to Israel. "We are chastened of the Lord that we may not be condemned with the world." Blessed be God that the righteous is saved, at all, even with difficulty—saved as the mariner from the storm—saved as a man escaping from his house in flames—saved as Lot from Sodom. What a narrow escape did he make ! The angel of the Lord charged him to leave the devoted city before he would lay it in ruins, and while he lingered, the angel laid hold on him, led him out of the city, and said : "Escape for thy life ; look not behind thee. neither stay thou in all the plain ; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed." One of his number looked back and perished. The sulphur overtook her on the plain, and she became a pillar of salt ! O, terrible warning to sinners ! With such difficulty Lot escaped the sulphurous flames of

that wicked place. But O, the condition of those left in Sodom ! The rebellious city was buried in sleep ; the morning arose in all its glory — the cheerful birds hailed its approach with their warbling notes — the gentle breeze bore on its wings the sweet breath of morn, and the sun begun to gild the heavens with his glorious beams ; but his light was soon obscured by a cloud surcharged with awful destruction. It soon burst in torrents of liquid fire, spreading consternation and death in its way. The thunders roared, the lightnings flashed, and the earth quaked with fear. How terrible to behold ! How much more terrible to feel ! In what wild disorder did the poor wretches flee when God scattered his artillery, and they felt its burning flame ! How vain was every retreat they sought ! The hail and the fire of divine wrath swept away every refuge. Their idols could not save them, their temples were in flames. There was none to save — God answered not their cries, and being tormented with great heat, they blasphemed his name, and gnawed their tongues for pain. The air rung with the cries of all — young and old, rich and poor — till their last feeble breath expired on the distant breeze, and they sunk into the lake, which burns with fire and brimstone, where the worm dies not and the fire is not quenched. O, what an example of the difficulty with which the righteous are saved, and of the ruin of the wicked, when they fall into the hands of the living

God, who "turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly ; and delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked." 2 Pt. ii : 6, 7. These cities "are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." Jude, 7. O, how dreadful is the ruin of the wicked ! How difficult, and yet how great and glorious is the salvation of the righteous !

"Encountered thus, with enemies without,
Within, like bark that meets opposings winds
And floods, this way, now that — she steers athwart,
Tossed by the waves, and driven by the storm ;
But still the pilot, ancient at the helm,
The harbor keeps in eye, and after much
Of danger past, and many a prayer rude,
He runs her safely in — so was the man
Of God beset, so tossed by adverse winds ;
And so his eye upon the land of life
He kept. Virtue grew daily stronger, sin
Decayed ; his enemies repulsed, retired ;
Till at the stature of a perfect man
In Christ arrived, and with the Spirit filled,
He gained the harbor of eternal rest."

"If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear ?" Is not this a most serious question ? The ungodly and the sinner are those who are unrenewed in heart, whether guilty of few or many sins. They think God is like them-

selves, and will not reprove their sin, but always keep silence—justice will sleep forever, and judgment will not return to slay those who would not have Jesus reign over them. Now they stand in the assembly of the just; dwell under the same roof; feed at the same table; and often live in affluence, and are promoted to great honor and power in the world. But where shall they appear when God makes up his jewels? When the king comes to view the guests, will he not discover and separate them from the just, as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats? Will he not come with his fan in his hand, and thoroughly purge his floor, and send his angels to gather the tares into bundles, and burn them? Where shall they appear? Alas! where? Shall they appear in some safer world where no fiends torment; no Christians thirst for gold; no hand of justice, even late, overtakes the transgressor? Will they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, or in the bottom of the sea, or set their nest among the stars? God will search them out, and bring them before his dreadful tribunal.

Consider the awful solemnity of that great day when the Son of Man will come in the clouds, with power and great glory to judge the world, and execute vengeance on his enemies. At the sound of the last trumpet the dead will be raised “and come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damna-

tion." Jn. v: 29. In vain can they escape, for God is omnipresent. "He that fleeth of them shall not flee away." Am. ix: 1. Will God suffer them to escape when he exercises his own people with so many and so great difficulties? Oh, how will they appear, and what will they answer their Maker for all their ungodly deeds? If they plead they are his creatures, he will reply they have made themselves unworthy of his favor; and now it is just that "he who made them should not have mercy on them, and he that formed them should show them no favor." Is. xxvii: 11. They must perish, because they have despised the Gospel which brings salvation; and their former conduct will then aggravate their misery. How can they endure that dreadful language, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire!" O, what will it be to depart from Him whose presence is the light, and joy, and glory of heaven! What will it be to dwell forever in the pit of the undone! In view of all this, "the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" Re. vi: 15-17. So great is their distress, they desire to be crushed

beneath the mountains ; but the mountains regard not their cry. "They seek death and shall not find it, and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them." *Re. ix : 6.* Oh, consider this, ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you. What a pitiable condition is that of the unrenewed sinner ! Appear he must with terror and consternation before the bar of Jehovah ! O, unhappy and miserable creatures, will you not *now* flee from the wrath to come, and cast in your lot with the righteous ? We pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. Seek the Lord while he may be found, and call on him while he is near. He waits to be gracious, and declares, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" — no, in no wise, on no account.

Let not the righteous murmur because salvation is attended with difficulty — because God strews our way with thorns as well as with roses. He might justly have sworn that we should not enter into his rest, and left us to perish with the ungodly world. Oh, think what the salvation of the Lord is — think what hell is, and ask if it is not worth our trouble to flee from the wrath to come ! What would those in torment now think of salvation were it in their offer ? Would they not submit to everything for its sake ? Do not the inhabitants of heaven think it worth all they endured for it ? and would they not endure even more rather than fail to obtain their everlasting bliss ?

In our difficulties, which are light in comparison with the eternal weight of glory which awaits us, let us depend on divine aid; for "when we are weak, then are we strong." If God would leave us to but one of these difficulties, it would be too much for us; and what would it be were all combined? Come to the throne of grace for help. In opposition to all difficulties and dangers, let us renew our resolutions and efforts for God and our own souls. It is serious business to get to heaven. It is not enough to give a few serious thoughts about it on the Sabbath, and dismiss them through the week. Our life is a warfare. Our work is not like husbandry, where the corn grows while men sleep. It is like the work of soldiers keeping guard of a besieged city. If they desert their post, or sleep, the result may be fatal. So the Christian soldier must put on the whole armor of God — be sober and vigilant, and not discouraged like the Israelites, because of the way, and the evil report of enemies. He must scale the walls and resist the sons of Anak. The land is good and God is for us, and our labor shall not be in vain in the Lord.

But to which class of men do we belong? Have we seen our absolute need of Christ — been renewed by his Spirit — believed with the heart unto righteousness, and with the mouth made confession unto salvation? Or are we still enemies of the Cross? This is a most important question, and the more difficult to

determine, if we have professed our faith in Christ, and by our sins have contradicted our profession and engagements to him. But if our sins are our greatest grief and burden, and if grace generally prevails, we need not in the language of despair say, there is no hope ; for God will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. A broken spirit is to him a pleasing sacrifice, godly sorrow works repentance unto salvation, and to such mourners he will restore comfort and heal them. O, let us determine this question, and encounter all difficulties rather than run the hazard of losing our own souls. We must all have a part in the solemnity of that great and terrible day of the Lord, which will burn like an oven, and consume his enemies. Let us adore and praise God for the glorious prospects which lie before us, and for the infinite rewards he has promised, which will more than compensate for all the difficulties of salvation. Let us have respect to the recompense of the reward ; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. Let us remember “ Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory ; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen ; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” Amidst carnal objects and a worldly atmosphere, let us maintain a holy life until our

Saviour calls us home ; and when the great conflict is over, we shall retire from the field, reviewing our conquests and receive a crown of life — sorrow and sighing shall flee away, and no returning mists of earth shall ever draw one darkening shadow over our brow of light, while we sing our glorious song of triumph, under the banner of God's everlasting love.

“ My soul, with all thy wakened powers,
Survey the heavenly prize ;
Nor let the glittering toys of earth
Allure thy wandering eyes.

The splendid crown which Moses sought,
Still beams around his brow,
Though soon, great Pharaoh's sceptred pride
Was taught by death to bow.

The joys and treasures of a day
I cheerfully resign ;
Rich in that large immortal store
Secured by grace divine.

Let fools my wiser choice deride —
Angels and God approve —
Nor scorn of men, nor rage of Hell,
My steadfast soul shall move.

With ardent eye that bright reward
I daily will survey ;
And in the blooming prospect lose
The sorrows of the way.”

VII.

SALVATION BY GRACE.

“ Stupendous grace ! and can it be
Designed for rebels such as we ?
O let our ardent praises rise,
High as our hopes beyond the skies !—
O may that love in strains sublime,
Be sung to the latest hour of time !
And let eternity confess,
Through all its rounds, the matchless grace.”

GRACE is a word which never loses its charm by age, or repetition. “ By grace are ye saved through faith,” is inspired language no less charming now than it was about two thousand years ago. It signifies favor with God, or with man : thus, Joseph found grace in the sight of his master, and Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord when he destroyed the Old world. It conveys the idea of something acceptable, beautiful and lovely, as “ Grace was in all her steps.” It is said of wisdom, “ When thou dost embrace her, she shall give to thine head an ornament of grace ; a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.” Grace signifies the free and eternal love, or favor of God, which is the great moving cause of all the blessings we receive from Him “ who hath saved us and called us with an holy

calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." 2 Tim. i: 9. Salvation is therefore by grace; and if by grace, then it is no more of works. "By grace are ye saved through faith—not of works lest any man should boast." Grace stands opposed to works, and excludes boasting. It is favor shown to the hell-deserving, and is used to signify the application of Christ's righteousness, by virtue of which we become righteous in God's sight. Hence it is said, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." Ro. v: 20, 21. This love, or grace, or everlasting favor of God, on which our salvation depends, originated in his own mind, without the influence of any external cause. It sprung spontaneously from his own nature, and was not procured even by his own Son; for "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." What an exhibition is here made of divine love—of free favor—of unmerited grace! What greater gift could God bestow on a lost world than the gift of his own Son! Oh, have we no hearts of gratitude and praise for this unspeakable gift! When the foundations of the earth were laid, the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God

shouted for joy. When an angel announced the tidings of the Saviour's birth, a multitude of the heavenly host praised God, saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men;" and have not we, on whom all these infinite blessings terminate, any grateful hearts to celebrate the exceeding riches of his grace—the wonders of redeeming love—"Love without end, and without measure grace."

Grace signifies the operation of divine love on the soul—the work of the Spirit in renewing the soul, in destroying sin, and enabling us to obey God in all things. Thus he says: "Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Ro. vi: 14; 2 Cor. xii: 9. This is the distinguishing grace of God which makes one sinner differ from another, and say: "By the grace of God I am what I am." Oh, may it reign in our hearts through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord, and make us differ from those that perish! It signifies a state of reconciliation and peace with God, and points out the wonderful love and bounty of Christ Jesus, "by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand." "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." Ro. v: 2; Cor. viii: 9. Happy, yea, thrice happy are all who are reconciled to God

by the death of his Son, and who know in their own experience the exceeding riches of the grace—the love and bounty of Christ Jesus in becoming poor that we through his poverty might be rich !

Grace signifies the Gospel, in which the love of God is revealed, and by which the blessings it contains are communicated to us who believe. This is the grace of God which has appeared unto all men, and which we are exhorted not to receive in vain. It signifies the office of apostleship, together with all necessary qualifications for the right discharge of that office. “Unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.” *Ep. iii: 8.* Besides many things already mentioned, grace signifies divine assistance, the love and fear of God in the heart, and eternal life, or final salvation, which God graciously bestows on his people. Grace to help in time of need, signifies divine assistance to support under trials, and to strengthen for the discharge of duty. By this grace, this assistance, this love and fear of God in the heart, Paul declares : “We have had our conversation in the world.” “Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” *1 Pt. i: 13.*

In the sense in which the word Grace is used in this essay, it signifies all that is implied in the contrivance,

accomplishment and application of salvation to our souls, from first to last — from the period of God's own purpose and grace — from the grace that calls us out of darkness into his marvelous light, to the grace that opens the gate of Heaven to our ravished eyes, and encircles our brow with a crown of glory that fades not away.

Salvation is of grace ; not of works lest any man should boast. It is of the exceeding riches of God's grace, abounding to the chief of sinners, and manifested in the magnitude of our guilt, and in the pardon, and mercy he extends to us. It is the exceeding riches of his grace, in quickening us when dead in trespasses and sins ; in leading us to know, and love, and serve him, and rejoice in hope of his glory. It is of the riches of his grace in the gift of his Son ; in the sacrifice he has made ; in the salvation he has procured ; in the grace and blessedness and peace he grants on earth, and the glory that will be given at the revelation of Jesus Christ. All is of grace — all the manifestation of the exceeding riches of grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. To this conclusion we are brought, not only from the testimony of Scripture, but also from a view of ourselves even after conversion. Our innumerable provocations might have tempted God to withdraw his grace, and left us to perish in our sins. But even to this hour his patience has borne with us. How often have

we turned back in our hearts to the flesh-pots of Egypt ; how often have we cherished, instead of detested in our hearts the very thought of sin ; and yet the long-suffering of God has not cut us off ! O, how numberless are our sins ; how many are our backslidings, and how great is God's mercy to us ! How often has he lifted us up, watched over us, and followed us with his grace, and his word, and Spirit, and messengers, to bring us back from our evil ways with contrition of heart and gratitude for all his mercies ! O, what monuments of grace are we ! How often in a thousand ways do the dealings of his wisdom, providence and love, display the exceeding riches of his grace in our eternal salvation !

In the language of John Wesley : " All the blessings which God has bestowed on man, are of his mere grace, bounty, or favor ; his free unmerited favor — favor altogether undeserved ; man having no claim to the least of his mercies. There is nothing we are, or have, or do, which can deserve the least thing at God's hand. All our works, Thou, O God, hast wrought in us, and whatever righteousness may be found in man, this is also the gift of God. If then sinful men find favor with God, it is *grace upon grace*. If God vouchsafe still to pour fresh blessings upon us, yea the greatest of all blessings, Salvation ; what can we say to these things, but thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift ! — and thus it is. Herein God

commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died to save us. By grace are ye saved through faith." What evangelical language is this ! How full of the unction of the Spirit of all grace — how expressive of the Song of the Redeemed in glory disclaiming all human merit, and ascribing to Jesus alone all the honor of their salvation !

" The countless multitude on high,
Who tune their songs to Jesus name ;
All merit of their own deny,
And Jesus' worth alone proclaim.

Firm on the ground of sovereign grace,
They stand before Jehovah's throne ;
The only song in that blest place
Is, 'Thou art worthy,' Thou alone.

With spotless robes of purest white,
And branches of triumphal palm ;
They shout with transports of delight,
The ceaseless, universal psalm.

Salvation's glory all be paid
To Him who sits upon the throne,
And to the Lamb, whose blood was shed ;
Thou, Thou art worthy, Thou alone."

SALVATION IS BY GRACE IN ITS ORIGIN. This doctrine is clearly taught by revelation which declares, "God has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory

of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood; the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace." The grand design of salvation by grace is to display the exceeding riches of grace in all subsequent ages—"That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." *Ep. ii: 7.* Salvation by grace is according to the purpose which he has purposed in himself, that we should be to the praise of his glory; and that all things pertaining to eternal life, should be to the praise of the glory of his grace. Thus it is said: "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works; but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." *2 Tim i: 9.* Here is the unutterable sum of the whole mystery of redemption, commencing, continuing and terminating in grace. The love of the Father in giving his Son; the love of the Son in giving himself for our redemption; and the love of the Spirit in applying that redemption to our souls, all declare salvation originated in grace. Who can tell the full import of that wonderful language: "God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all!" and who can comprehend the love of Christ in giving himself "a ransom for all, to be testified in due time"—"In his love, and in his pity he redeemed

them." *Is. lxiii: 9.* He left the throne of his glory — assumed our nature in the most humble condition — submitted to a life of extreme poverty and reproach, and endured the cursed death of the Cross to redeem us from the wrath to come, and to give us an inheritance in Heaven. For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. "Thou Son of the Blessed, what grace was manifest in thy condescension! Grace brought thee down from Heaven; grace stript thee of thy glory; grace made thee poor and despicable; grace made thee bear such burdens of sin, such burdens of sorrow, such burdens of God's curse as are unspeakable! O, Son of God! Grace was in all thy tears; grace came bubbling out of thy side with thy blood; grace came forth with every word from thy sweet mouth; grace is poured into thy lips, and all bore him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth; grace came out where the whip smote thee, where the thorns pricked thee, where the nails and spear pierced thee. O, blessed Son of God! Here is grace indeed! Unsearchable riches of grace! Unthought of riches of grace! Grace to make angels wonder; grace to make sinners happy; grace to astonish devils. And what will become of them that trample under foot this Son of God?" (Bunyan.)

What riches of grace are also manifested by the

Holy Spirit in our salvation! What wonderful love is displayed by him in entering our souls defiled by sin, renewing them, dwelling in them, producing in them his blessed fruits — in applying redemption, and becoming the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory! Oh, may we feel his love operating in our souls, inflaming them with love, raising them above the sordid things of time and sense, and bearing them on to God and to glory!

“ Descend, immortal Dove,
Spread thy kind wings abroad,
And wrapt in flames of holy love,
Bear all my soul to God.

Jesus my Lord, reveal
In charms of grace divine,
And be thyself, the sacred seal,
That Pearl of price is mine.

Behold, my heart expands
To catch the heavenly fire,
It longs to feel the gentle bands,
And groans with strong desire.

Thy love, my God, appears,
And brings salvation down;
My cordial through this vale of tears,
In Paradise my crown.”

Our natural state proves salvation is by grace in its origin. When we were “dead in trespasses and sins,” had nothing and could do nothing to merit God’s

favor, he quickened us by his Spirit. He called us out of darkness into his marvelous light ; he planted us by his grace and grafted us into the good Olive. Paul declares, that God called him by his grace ; not from pitiable failings, but from great sins — from breathing out slaughter against the Church. The same is true of the woman of Samaria, living in adultery, when she met the Saviour, and felt the power of his grace. It is also true of the thief on the cross, and it is true of every sinner who obtains salvation.

Man's natural state is one of rebellion and ruin. His carnal mind is enmity against God ; hence, it is said, "While we were yet sinners Christ died for us." Ro. v : 8. While the sinner is going on in a course of rebellion, flattering himself, in his own blinded eye, that the hatefulness of his iniquity will not be found out, the Spirit sends an arrow of conviction into his heart, shows him his sin and danger, and inability to meet the claims of law and justice. Then guilt for sins committed, and for mercies abused, lies on his soul like mountains of brass. He sees that his best works, instead of coming from love to God, come from an evil heart ; and that his whole life has been one course of sin. He feels that he is the chief of sinners, and if saved at all it must be by grace. The enormity of his sins causes him to cry : O, wretched man that I am ! what shall I do ? where shall I go ? Shall I resort to scenes of mirth and pleasure and revelry, or

build a tower whose top may reach to heaven, or flee to a foreign land, or reform and bestow all my goods to feed the poor, endow some religious institution, and thus atone for my sins? Shall I resort to prayer? Alas! my prayers need atonement—my tears need washing—my reformation needs pardon. Oh, who will entreat for me? I have obeyed my lusts and appetites instead of God; have neglected his word and ordinances; scorned his people; counted the Sabbath a weariness, and said: “What is the Almighty that we should serve him, and what profit should we have if we pray unto him?” Job, xxi: 15 O, wretch that I am! I am lost forever unless saved by grace! Deserving to perish, I prostrate myself at thy feet, O Lord, praying thee to save me, the chief of sinners, that where sin has abounded grace may much more abound. Jesus is the Saviour I want; his salvation is every way suited to my condition—*perfect, free, full and everlasting*. What can I have or desire more? In this will I rest, in this will I glory. Yes, instead of looking to ourselves for something to commend us to God, and render us worthy of salvation, we must come to him as sinners, ruined, undone, ready to perish and destitute of all good, or merit in the sight of Heaven. The Gospel, with all its blessings; Christ with all his fullness, are provisions of grace for the wretched and guilty, who have nothing of their own, and no hope in themselves. “The blessings of grace

were never designed to distinguish the worthy, or to reward merit, but to relieve the wretched and save the desperate." Publicans and harlots enter into the kingdom of heaven before self-righteous sinners. When man is called by grace, he has no beauty, nor any excellence why he should be desired. God's time of love is when man "lies in the open field polluted in his own blood." Ez. xvi: 5, 6. Hence salvation originates in grace.

SALVATION IS BY GRACE IN ITS BESTOWMENT. We have no claims on God's bounty—no equivalent to offer for the least of his mercies. We are nothing; have nothing, and can do nothing which deserves the least favor at his hand. Then if we receive salvation, it must be by grace. If all the blessings God bestows on man are of his mere grace, bounty, or favor—his free unmerited favor, favor altogether undeserved—then salvation must be by *grace upon grace*. Hence it is said, we are "justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Ro. iii: 24. "We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace." Ep. i: 7. Being justified by his blood, we shall be saved by his life. Hence it is evident that the love of God is the moving cause, and the death of Christ the procuring cause of salvation. All is of *grace*—all of the exceeding riches of grace. This is true of pardon, and every other blessing implied in salvation. Jesus is

exalted “a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.” Of God he is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. Our sins are pardoned through his blood, and we are justified freely by his grace. This pardon is *free*, and *full*, and *everlasting* and every way becoming God. It extends to all sin, and all aggravations of sin, to the chief of sinners, and the foulest crimes. He is the Lord God, merciful and gracious — ready to forgive ; and when he forgives sin, he remembers it no more. It is removed from us as far as the East is distant from the West, and is sunk like lead in the mighty waters. Crimson colored sins are made white as snow. It is God’s prerogative to forgive and save to the uttermost ; and none forgives and saves like him. He blots out all our iniquities ; casts them into the sea of oblivion, and when they are sought for they shall not be found, because atonement is made for them by the blood of Immanuel. All this is of grace, free, unmerited grace ; and not for any excellence in man or good done by him. It is for God’s name sake, to the praise of the glory of his grace. With what astonishing language does God address sinners, when he says : “Thou hast brought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices ; but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins ; thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities. I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions

for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Is. xliii: 24, 25. O, the exceeding riches of grace in pardoning the sinner after such conduct, when he might expect *wrath* upon wrath, instead of *grace* upon grace! Certainly God's ways are not as our ways. "He passes an act of oblivion on millions and millions of the most aggravated transgressions, and complicated crimes." Christ's death is the procuring cause, and God's glory the end for which all this is done; and this way of pardoning and saving sinners by grace, shows the enormous evil of sin, and the infinitude of divine love. It excites the wonder of angels; the love and gratitude of men, and inspires even the chief of sinners with hope. It is suited to our destitute condition; it displays the everlasting and unbounded love of God to man; it rests on the atonement of his Son, on his promise, oath and faithfulness; and if these fail, then the firm foundation of the vast universe must utterly fail.

If his children go astray, he will visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes; but will not take away his loving kindness. "The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." If they fall, they shall not be utterly cast down. As they daily offend him, they daily pray for pardon, and for its renewed manifestation. There is forgiveness with God that he may be

feared, and plenteous redemption is ever found with him. "It is forgiveness such as becomes him ; such as is suitable to his greatness, and goodness, and all other excellencies of his nature — such as that wherein he will be known to be God. It is *free, full, bottomless, boundless, absolute.*" This is adapted to our wants ; worthy of God, and worthy of all acceptation. Oh, let us arouse from our slumbers, and live no longer without the evidence of pardon and salvation ! Can we, on the verge of eternity, be at ease in Zion, or in sin ; pursue tantalizing pleasure, and live uncertain, whether the next day, or hour, will find us in heaven or in hell ? Forbid it, gracious Heaven ! Sensible of our sins, and longing for forgiveness, let us look to the blessed Saviour for eternal life — let us come with boldness to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. If we have the manifestation of pardon, let us give God all the glory, be zealous in his service, and faithful in every good work. Let our language be : "Not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy name give glory, for thy truth and for thy mercies' sake." "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

Ti. iii : 5.

He not only pardons, but justifies the sinner ; acquits and accepts him as righteous in his sight, only for

the righteousness of Christ, received by faith, and accounted his own. This righteousness is the ground of his hope, pardon, justification, and salvation; and when God justifies the sinner on this ground, he never revokes his sentence. It is immutable as his throne, and fraught with blessings numberless, undeserved, and eternal. It is earnestly sought and gratefully received by the awakened sinner. Then, how can salvation be, except by grace in its bestowment? How can man be pardoned, justified and saved, except by grace? How shall mortal man be just with God? Not by works, but by grace — by becoming nothing, that Christ may be all in all, and God glorified in our salvation. O, thrice happy are all who are justified on the ground of Christ's righteousness, freely by the grace of God through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. They receive the spirit of adoption — become heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, and have an everlasting name that shall not be cut off. They are made pillars in the temple of God, where they shall go no more out, and are made kings and priests unto God their Father. He guides them with his counsel through life; sustains them in death, and sends his angels to bring them into everlasting habitations to obtain the inheritance of the saints in light.

This inheritance includes all the blessings of grace and of glory. "All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollas, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death,

or things present, or things to come : all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." 1 Cor. iii : 22, 23. All these blessings are the free, unmerited and unspeakable gift of God. All are bestowed on us through the riches of free, undeserved and unmerited grace — all "to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved." Ep. i : 5, 6.

Salvation is bestowed on men and not on angels — on some men, and not on others equally amiable and excellent. Does not this declare salvation is by grace in its bestowment? Oh, may we be the happy subjects of this unmerited and distinguishing grace, and give the glory to the God of all grace and comfort ! It flows from God through Jesus Christ our Lord. O, God of our salvation — O, Sun of Righteousness, arise with healing in thy wings, and fill our souls with holiness and peace and ardent love to thee !

" In thee all treasures lie,
From thee all blessings flow ;
Thou art the bliss of saints above,
The joy of saints below.

Oh come and make me thine,
A sinner saved by *grace* ;
Then shall I sing with loudest strains,
In heaven thy dwelling place.

When standing round the throne,
Amid the ransom'd throng,
Thy praise shall be my sweet employ
While love inspires my song."

SALVATION IS BY GRACE IN ITS PROGRESS. As in the natural so in the spiritual world, the germ, or vital principle, is gradually developed and brought to maturity. In the kingdom of Nature there is first "the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." The tender twig becomes a lofty tree extending its branches, and rearing its top to heaven. The purling brook flows on increasing in size and strength until it becomes a mighty river, terminating in the vast ocean. The sun, advancing silently and irresistibly, increases in brightness from the faint dawn of day to his meridian splendor. All these things advance and come to perfection only by virtue of the same power that first commanded the light to shine out of darkness. So in the kingdom of Grace, represented in Scripture by many beautiful emblems drawn from the natural world, the believer is first a babe, then a young man, then a father in Christ. He is a tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified; and he shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine—he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon—he shall flourish like the palm-tree—his branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon. Not as though he were already perfect, he presses on to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. He goes from strength to strength—he waxes stronger and stronger—his path is as the shining light which

shines more and more unto the perfect day. He grows in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, until he comes to a perfect man — unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. He dies more and more unto sin, and lives unto righteousness — he becomes more meek and humble, forbearing and forgiving in his disposition — more patient and submissive under trials — more ardent in his love to God — more devoted, diligent, zealous and faithful in his service — more holy and heavenly in his walk and conversation — more conformed to Christ in all things. He is changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord, and adds to his faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity. All this progress is made, and all these graces abound in the believer, and gradually, silently and irresistibly come to perfection, *only* by virtue of the same Divine power that first gave them existence in the soul. It is all by grace.

It is the established order in nature, and in grace, to bring things to perfection by a gradual process. God could do otherwise. He could have made the world at once in all its variety, beauty and excellence; but he employed six days, and rested the seventh to give us an example of labor and of rest. He could bring

the products of the earth at once to perfection; but for wise reasons he brings them on by a slow silent and imperceptible process. So he could save the sinner at once; bring him from the cross to the crown the same day, hour or moment, he was first touched by his renewing Spirit; but in his wisdom he takes another way, and gradually finishes the work he has commenced in his soul. He could have brought the Israelites directly from Egypt, by a near way into the land of promise; but he led them forty years in the wilderness by a circuitous way, to humble them and prove them, to know what was in their heart, and to complete his own work of grace in their souls. De. viii: 2. 3 He soon brought them from Egypt to Kadesh-barnea, the last resting place on the confines of Canaan, and breathed on them the fragrance of the flowery spices, wafted down into the desert from that land which flowed with milk and honey, and gave them some clusters of the grapes of Eschol, to prepare and strengthen them for the toils and conflicts of their journey, and after that, for their sins, sent them back into the howling wilderness, to wander in a solitary way. No sooner had they chanted their triumphant song of deliverance, on the shores of the Red Sea, and the joyful sound died away on the bosom of the deep, where their enemies lay buried in ruin, than their toils and their trials began. So he often brings the Christian, warm with the love of his espousals, and strong in the

exercise of that faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, to the very confines of Heaven. The gales of the Spirit blow gently on his soul ; the spices flow out, and his faith looks across the gulf of time, pierces the veil of eternity, and brings all Heaven before his ravished eye. He imagines himself within its golden streets, and gates of pearl. But alas ! he awakes from his pleasant dreams, and finds himself again far back in the dark world of sin, where he has yet something to do for Christ's name sake, and much to learn of the perfections and providence of God, and of the lurking depravity of his own wayward heart, before he can enter into eternal rest, and receive his unfading crown. God has good reasons for keeping us so long in the wilderness, trying and leading us through fire and water, clouds and darkness, before he brings us to the wealthy place where the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick. We are so carnal, so unready — our hearts are so chained to the dust, and so little in unison with our high destiny — we are such slow scholars in the school of Christ, that we are sent back to a sterner school to learn our lessons over again, and to grow in grace. It is because we are unripe, that we stand so long in the field exposed to the scorching suns, and bleaching rains of a checkered scene of joy and sorrow. We would also go back and never return, if God did not uphold and lead us on from strength to strength, until we arrive safe and joyful in the golden streets of the New Jeru-

salem. "Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living ;" to strengthen his graces and prepare him for Heaven. He bears us as on eagles' wings ; he brings us by a way that we know not ; he leads us in paths that we have not known ; he makes darkness light, and crooked things straight, these things he will do and not forsake us. He leads us by his pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night ; feeds us with manna from heaven, and allays our thirst with water from the smitten Rock, and all this time he is bringing us nearer to the land of promise, and of rest. By these trials grace is taking deeper root, like the tree watered by genial showers, and shaken by windy storm and tempest. The more Israel was oppressed the more he grew—the more the principle of grace is tried, the more it is developed. Tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope.

We are also soldiers of Christ warring a good warfare ; and as Hannibal, by the command of his father, swore at the altar to maintain an irreconcilable enmity against the Romans, so we have sworn at the foot of the Cross to maintain constant and irreconcilable war against all sin ; to enter into no alliance, and admit of no truce with the enemies of Christ and of our own souls. The love of Christ constrains us ; the relation he sustains to us ; the promises he has given us ; the

Spirit that dwells in us, and the glorious prospect before us — all animate and strengthen us in our journey to that better country, which God has promised his people. Every believer will wax stronger and stronger, and not one will fail of the promised reward ; not one will be left behind to perish in the wilderness ; not one will be missing from that great multitude, which no man can number in that day when God makes up his jewels. Though for their sin they may be sent back into the desert, and suffer as his ancient people did, or as the man after his own heart ; and though their persuasion of their interest in Christ may be terribly shaken, if not lost for a season, so as to wound their hearts with the keenest anguish, till after many prayers, and tears, and vows, they are again favored with the smiles of God's countenance, and the joy of his salvation — yet, the Spirit which dwells in them as a well of living water springing up into everlasting life ; and the atonement of Christ and his intercession in their behalf ; and the provisions of the covenant of grace ; and the perfections of Jehovah, will not suffer them to perish on the way. They will still advance in the divine life, growing in grace until they come to a perfect man in Christ Jesus ; till grace is made perfect in weakness, and they are received into mansions of endless bliss, where they will chant their triumphant song of deliverance. They are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. “Since

we stand not like Adam upon our own feet, but are branches of such a vine as never withers ; members of such a head as never dies ; sharers of such a Spirit as cleanses, heals and purifies the heart ; partakers of such promises as are sealed with the oath of God — since we live not by our own life, but by the life of faith ; are not led or sealed by our own spirit, but by the Spirit of Christ ; do not obtain mercy by our own prayers, but by the intercession of Christ ; stand not reconciled to God by our own endeavors, but by the propitiation wrought by Christ, who loved us when we were enemies, and in our blood — who is both willing and able to save us to the uttermost, and to preserve his own mercies in us — to whose office it belongs to take order that none who are given unto him be lost, — undoubtedly that life of Christ in us, which is thus underpropped, though it be not privileged from temptations, no, not from backslidings, yet it is an abiding life. He who raised our souls from death, will either preserve our feet from falling ; or if we do fall, will heal our backslidings, and will save us freely.” — (*Bp. Reynolds.*)

The same Divine hand that first formed the principle of grace in our souls, will increase and strengthen it through life, until he brings it to perfection in glory. “Being confident of this very thing that he who has begun a good work in you will perform it until the

day of Jesus Christ." Ph. i: 6. Hence all the way from first to last salvation is by grace.

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!

That saved a wretch like me!

I once was lost, but now am found,—

Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace, that taught my heart to fear,

And grace my fears relieved;

How precious did that grace appear

The hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils and snares,

I have already come;

'Tis *grace* has brought me safe *thus far*,

And grace will lead me home."

SALVATION IS BY GRACE IN ITS CONSUMMATION. God always puts the finishing stroke on his own work, both in the kingdom of Nature and of Grace. Hence, "grace reigns through righteousness unto *eternal life* by Jesus Christ our Lord." Ro. v: 21. It brings us from darkness into God's marvelous light—from a world of sin and sorrow to the Paradise of God, watered by the river of life, clear as crystal, and enlightened by the glory of God and of the Lamb. There, on either side of the river grows the Tree of Life bearing twelve manner of fruits, under whose shadow the redeemed sit with great delight. There, is the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. There, is

the inheritance of the saints in light, with all its pure and unmingled joys, where trouble is over and sorrow has an end ; “ for there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away, and God shall be with them, and be their God, and shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” There, is fullness of joy, and there are pleasures forevermore ; there, they come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads ; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. There, they enjoy the society of God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, of angels, patriarchs, prophets, apostles and the spirits of just men made perfect ; and arrayed in robes of linen pure, and crowns of life, they wave their palms of triumph and strike their golden harps in honor of Him who died on Calvary to procure their salvation, and exclaim : “ O, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! ” “ Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory ! Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” There, they contemplate his power, love and mercy in redeeming them by his grace ; in pardoning their sins ; in subduing their foes, and saving them with an everlasting salvation ; and trace the streams of all this blessedness to the great overflowing fountain of divine grace. “ With

adoring hearts and ravished eyes, with inflamed devotion and notes divinely sweet, they join the heavenly Choir in that seraphic hymn, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts. Heaven and earth are full of his glory. How inconceivable the pleasure, how divine the joy." Free from that pride and imperfection which belong to man in this life, and seeing with open face the riches of that grace which has redeemed and saved them, and brought them in safety through all their trials to mansions of endless bliss, their hearts are inflamed with the most ardent love, and their voices are raised in the loudest strains, and sweetest tones of grateful praise to God and to the Lamb for his great love wherewith he has loved them. There, they shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father—there, this mortal shall put on immortality—there, their bodies will be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body—there, they will behold and adore with rapture that blessed Saviour, before whose face the heavens and the earth shall flee away, and before whose brightness ten thousand worlds lose their lustre. There, all the redeemed will meet around the throne of the Eternal, and ascribe all the glory of their salvation to the exceeding riches of unmerited grace. Their joy is unspeakable and full of glory; and still new scenes of bliss are continually opening to their ravished eyes. Their felicity is perfect and permanent as the throne of God. No greater happi-

ness can be enjoyed by men or angels. “Yet this — hear it, O ye nations! and listen ye isles from afar! while the millions of beatified saints dwell on this stupendous truth! this is the end of the victorious reign of grace — grace reigned in the eternal councils when contriving the way to this glorious end — grace reigned in providing the means and bestowing the blessings that were necessary to its accomplishment — grace reigned to the complete execution of the noble, the astonishing design, from first to last. Surely then reigning grace should have the unrivaled honor of all the blessings enjoyed by believers on earth, or by saints in light. Yes, it shall have the glory in all the churches of Christ below, and in all the triumphant hosts above. For when the last stone of the spiritual temple shall be laid, it will be with shoutings, grace, grace, unto it.” (*Booth.*)

“ Grace! ’tis a charming sound,
Harmonious to my ear;
Heaven with the echo shall resound,
And all the earth shall hear.

Grace first contrived a way
To save rebellious man;
And all the steps that grace display,
Which drew the wondrous plan.

Grace taught my wand’ring feet
To tread the heavenly road;
And new supplies each hour I meet,
While passing on to God.

Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days ;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

Yes, the free favor of God manifested in our salvation from first to last, is the all-absorbing theme of the saints in light ; and "after all that is imagined, or can be sung by men, or angels, by seraphs, or saints, in the church below, or in the choirs above, the charming subject will remain unexhausted to eternity : for the riches of Christ are unsearchable, and the grace of God is unbounded. Who, then"—

"Who shall fulfill the boundless song?
What vain pretender dares ?
The theme surmounts an angel's tongue,
And Gabriel's harp despairs."

Oh, what unbounded grace — what unmerited favor have we received of the Lord, who has made known to us the way of salvation through his own dear Son, while millions of our fallen race are sitting in the region and shadow of death, without a ray of hope beyond the grave ! They believe in the existence of a Supreme Being, who made, upholds and governs all things, animate and inanimate, visible and invisible, and they sigh for the light of the Gospel : but not a ray of Heaven's own light shines on their bewildered path, to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Not a star

of hope beyond the grave twinkles in their moral firmament. No messenger of peace brings to their slumbering ears the tidings of the promised Saviour. A vast moral waste lies before them. Amazement all, save what looms out from the dim light of nature. But "we have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the Day Star arise in your hearts." What a vast difference exists between their lot and ours! It is all of grace — amazing and undeserved grace; for by nature, what are we more than they, that we should receive such distinguished favors? What are we, that we should be favored with the glorious Gospel through which life and immortality are brought to light? O Lord! we are not worthy of all the mercies and all the truth which thou hast shown unto us. We are not worthy that thou shouldst come under our roof; but speak the word only, and we shall be healed. Is it not the Gospel which makes the vast difference between the Christian and heathen worlds? Are we not indebted to it for all our distinguished privileges, civil and religious, and for our hopes of happiness beyond the grave? Do not our state by nature, our conduct through life, and Christian experience, prove salvation is by grace?

Consider the supreme excellence of grace — its entire freeness — our absolute need of it, and the

dreadful end of rejecting it. It is an unspeakable gift, displaying the great love wherewith God has loved us. Salvation is according to the riches of his grace—the riches of the glory of his inheritance—the exceeding riches of his grace. After the world had been kept in expectation for a period of four thousand years, an angel was sent from Heaven to announce the Saviour's birth and bring us tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people. Angels ministered unto him—a voice from Heaven declared, this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased—multitudes cried Hosanna to the Son of David, who purchased salvation by his own blood, rose triumphant from the tomb, ascended on high far above all principality and power, gave gifts to men and sent his disciples to preach the everlasting Gospel for the salvation of sinners. They preached Christ and Him crucified, sealed the doctrine of the Cross with their own blood, and counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ their Lord.

O, how wonderful is that grace which brings us pardon for numberless sins; inspires us with hope that makes not ashamed; fills our hearts with joy and peace in believing; brings us into mansions of endless felicity; unfolds new scenes of beauty and glory prepared by Divine love; conforms us unto the Divine image, and makes us equal to the angels, perfect in

holiness and happiness, as we dwell before the throne of God, tuning our golden harps in honor of redeeming love. O, how unspeakable the joy! How inconceivable the bliss! But it is all according to the exceeding riches of grace.

The entire blessings of salvation are free to us — without money and without price. We are poor, sinful, unworthy and helpless beings, who can neither profit God by our services, nor merit anything at his hand. We cannot be profitable to God as he that is wise may be profitable to himself. We can neither increase nor diminish his essential glory. Neither man who dwells in houses of clay, nor angels who dwell around his throne can increase, or diminish his essential glory — neither can they purchase salvation. Hence it is free, or by grace — yea, all the blessings we receive both natural and spiritual are free. O, how free and how pleasant is the way of salvation! Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. Nothing is here forbidden but what is sinful; nothing is required but what is reasonable and just.

But O, how often have we rebelled against the God of our mercies! and if he would call us to account, how would we appear before his awful tribunal! What would we say for our numberless sins, known and unknown, remembered and forgotten! If still without grace, we are exposed to the penalty of the broken law, and O, how solemn is the question, "Who

among us shall dwell with devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Is. xxxiii: 14 Can we now plead anything in our defense, except the atonement of Jesus Christ, and the grace of God reigning in the Gospel? Nay, without grace we are undone. O, may we find grace in the eyes of the Lord! How dreadful is the result of not receiving grace, or of rejecting the offers of mercy. The time is fast coming when the unbeliever will not only feel its need; but will be excluded from all its untold blessings, and the thought that they were once in his offer, will exceedingly aggravate his misery. Alas! the proffers of mercy will soon be withdrawn. Eternity is at hand. There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave. After death is the judgment, when his state will be eternally fixed, and he will be delivered to the tormentors, who will cast him bound hand and foot into the prison of hell, where he must remain till he has paid the uttermost farthing. How dreadful to behold! How much more terrible to feel! It will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for those who have slighted the Gospel. God will resent the injuries they have done, by making the offers they have rejected, aggravate their misery while they then behold them forever beyond their reach. O, may those who have not received grace trifle no longer, but arouse to a sense of their danger, and faithfully discharge their

duty without raising captious objections ; for salvation is by grace through faith as the *means* or *medium* of communication and reception. The very covenant under which we live is a covenant of grace, well ordered in all things and sure, making provision for sin as well as for grace ; and since salvation is by grace, no sinner need despair, for it abounds to the chief and reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. Then let every one use the means, as he does in the natural world for obtaining the desired end. The promise : “ Seek and ye shall find,” is absolute. It is made by the God of truth who cannot lie, and whose power and faithfulness are pledged for its fulfillment. But when you have gone the round of duty, do not rob grace of its efficacy by attributing salvation in part to human merit ; for it is by grace, not of works lest any man should boast. Neither rob Christ of the unrivaled honor which belongs to him. He has purchased the Church with his own blood, and obtained eternal redemption for us. Then to his name be all the glory in the church below, and in the choirs above. “ Jesus is infinite in dignity and everlasting righteousness ; to contemplate him is a source of the sublimest pleasure ; to call him our own is a foundation of the most solid happiness. It is the daily desire of my soul to delight myself in his unsearchable riches, and triumph in the transcendant excellencies of Christ Jesus my Lord.

Jesus is a name that lightens our burdens, and sweetens all our woes. As all the fountains, the rivers and the clouds proceed from the sea ; so all our salvation and our happiness are founded in Christ, from the first gleam of hope that dawns in the penitent breast, even to the rapturous song of thanksgiving, which sounds from the glorified believer's tongue."

As grace signifies the eternal love of God — his love and fear in the heart, and the work of the Spirit in renewing the soul, let us seriously inquire if it dwells and reigns in our hearts. Can we say that we have found grace in the eyes of the Lord? and that the grace of God was not bestowed on us in vain? Wherever it exists, its divine and saving power is manifest. It produces an entire change in heart and life— clothes with humility and self-denial — expands with benevolence — elevates the affections above the world, and resigns us to the will of God in all things. It converts natural evils into spiritual blessings ; and without it, natural blessings, such as health, riches, friends, honor and power, often become a curse, and finally aggravate human misery.

Grace signifies divine assistance, and does it not bring us often to the throne of grace for that assistance to help in time of need? By it the Christian grows in spiritual stature, and in favor with God and man. It sustains him under trials — gives even affliction a grace, and reconciles man to his lot. By it he stands ;

has his conversation in the world, and is crowned in the end.

Does grace signify all that is implied in salvation—from the grace that reigns in the eternal councils, to the grace that calls and crowns us with a crown of glory? Then, what eternal debtors are we to free, undeserved, and unmerited grace! All the blessings we receive in time and eternity, flow from this everlasting love of God. We are naturally destitute, and can do nothing to merit this divine favor. “What hast thou, that thou didst not receive?” All our works, thou, O God, hast wrought in us: hence salvation is by grace in its origin, bestowment, progress, and consummation. Then, O God of our salvation, deny us what thou wilt of temporal blessings, only deny us not thy grace. Bring us, though it should be through fire and water—through clouds, and darkness—only bring us to “the wealthy place where the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.”

Is. xxxiii: 24. Oh! grant us the exceeding riches of thy grace, which calls us, not from pitiable failings, but from great sins—which follows us through all our wanderings, brings us back to the fold, preserves our feet from falling, and reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. Oh! bring home to our hearts, by the agency of thy Spirit, that soul-enlivening word, “My grace is sufficient for

thee ; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Oh ! may thy grace reign in our hearts : then we shall inherit all things, and sing to the praise of that grace which has made us differ from those that perish. Happy Christian ! though poor in wordly wealth, yet possessing all things which are essential to happiness in this world and in the world to come. But Oh ! how deplorable is the condition of those who are destitute of grace ! More deplorable than all they can imagine — poor, infinitely poor, beyond all conception, and exposed to wrath, divine and eternal. Or, if now they have riches, and honor, and pleasure, then beyond the grave they will be destitute of all good, and be filled with the bitterness of immitigated woe. Poor sinner ! your riches and honors will not save you ; and, without grace, your final portion is to be deplored and deprecated. But the Gospel still shines around you, and with a voice of mercy invites you to receive the adored Saviour in all his divine fullness and excellence. We entreat you, by the value of your souls — by the mercies of God — by the meekness and gentleness of Christ — by the pains of his life, and the agonies of his death — by the sweet promises of the Gospel, and the terrible threatenings of the law — by the scenes of the last Great Day — by the Song of the Redeemed, and by the wail of everlasting woe — to seek salvation now, through the exceeding riches of grace abounding to the chief of sinners. The voice

of free grace still calls you in the sweet tones of love and mercy ; but those tones will soon expire on the distant breeze. Oh, may we now hear that voice, whispering peace to our souls, and bearing them on, in flames of love to God ! How sweet the accents sound from the Redeemer's tongue — how full of love to a lost world ! How clearly do they prove that salvation is by grace, from the first gleam of hope which rises in the Christian's breast, to the rapturous song which falls from the glorified believer's tongue ! Oh, God of all grace and comfort, may thy grace reign in our hearts, through Jesus Christ, unto life eternal, and so prepare us for singing the new Song of Redemption when time shall be no more, and the last stone of the spiritual temple shall be brought with shoutings to the praise of the glory of thy grace !

“ Oh ! may thy grace the nations lead,
And Jews and Gentiles come ;
All traveling in one narrow path,
To one eternal home.”

VIII.

FAITH AND WORKS ESSENTIAL TO SALVATION.

“ O, how unlike the complex works of man,
Heaven's easy, artless, unencumbered plan !
No meretricious graces to beguile,
No clustering ornaments to clog the pile ;
From ostentation, as from weakness free,
It stands, like the cerulean arch we see,
Majestic in its own simplicity.
Inscribed above the portal, from afar
Conspicuous as the brightness of a star,
Legible only by the light they give,
Stand the soul-quickenings words : Believe and live ! ”

WHAT must I do to be saved ? is the anxious inquiry of one under deep conviction, and earnestly desiring deliverance from the dreadful penalty of sin. It is a question not of idle curiosity, but one of vast importance. It is not merely the question of the bewildered traveler, nor of the aspiring philosopher ; but it is the anxious inquiry of one sinking in the devouring waves ; or of the criminal on his way to execution. It comes from the very centre of his soul, aroused from his slumbers by an earthquake, and from his past sinful and hardened course by a guilty conscience anticipating the terrors of the last great day. The plain

answer given to this question by an inspired Apostle is : " Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." This is the only answer that can relieve his anxious mind, dreading the vengeance of Heaven and desiring deliverance from it. It points out the only way of deliverance, and the only object that can dispel his fears and inspire him with hope.

Poor sinner ! did you ever in earnest ask that most serious question ? Or, are you yet dead in trespasses and sins as was the Philippian jailer, before a great earthquake shook the foundations of the prison, threw open the doors, loosed every man's bands and sent an arrow of conviction into his inmost soul ? Long ago that prison has been laid in ruins, and the jailer has slept in Jesus ; but God will yet shake the foundations of the heavens, and the earth, and the great deep — burst the bars of the tomb, and set the prisoners free, when it will be too late for any sinner to ask that most solemn and important question. O, may you earnestly ask it *now*, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved in the great and terrible day of the Lord.

But what is faith and what office does it perform in our salvation ? Faith signifies " the assent of the mind to the truth of what is declared by another, resting entirely on his authority and veracity. It is belief on probable evidence of any kind. It is dependence on the veracity of another." In theology it signifies

“the affectionate and cordial assent of the mind to the truth of revelation, founded on the veracity of the sacred writers.” “Evangelical, justifying or saving faith is the assent of the mind to the truth of divine revelation, on the authority of God’s testimony, accompanied with a cordial consent of the will, or approbation of the heart; an entire confidence or trust in God’s character and declarations; and in the character and doctrines of Christ, with an unreserved surrender of the will to his guidance, and dependence on his merits for salvation.” In the language of Dwight, “the faith of the Gospel is that emotion of the mind which is called trust or confidence, exercised toward the moral character of God, and particularly of the Saviour.”

True Christian faith is a saving grace, or fruit of the Spirit — a divine gift — a supernatural principle formed in the mind of the believer by the Spirit of God — a principle which enables him to receive and appropriate Jesus Christ, with all his unsearchable riches, to himself personally, on the ground of his free offer in the Gospel, and claim him as his own. It consists in a real persuasion that Christ is freely given in the Gospel, not to *some* sinners; but to *us* in particular; and in receiving and appropriating him with all the infinite benefits of his death, to our own souls on the ground of God’s free offer.. His word proclaims Christ Jesus, as his unspeakable gift to a lost world, and invites

all the ends of the earth to look to him for salvation ; and assures them that whosoever believes in him shall not perish, but shall have everlasting life. This word entitles, authorizes and warrants every sinner to trust with confidence in Christ for his own special salvation, by virtue of God's invitation and command ; and this trust is wrought by the Spirit in the mind of every one who believes in Jesus Christ. This faith is a living, active, purifying and growing principle, and the instrumental cause of justification and salvation. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"—"By grace are ye saved through faith." Ro. v : 1 ; Ep. ii : 8. It influences the will and affections, works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world, and renders the whole man obedient to the Gospel. It assures us of the reality and worth of invisible and eternal things—brings them present to the mind, and assures us that God will infallibly do what he has promised. Its grand object is Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of faith. Its language is : " My Lord and my God"—" He loved me, and gave himself for me." Its foundation is the divine perfections — God's unerring knowledge, immutable truth, infinite goodness and almighty power. In the language of inspiration, faith is a "fruit of the Spirit"—"the gift of God"—"the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

“ Faith was bewildered much by men who meant
To make it clear — so simple in itself —
A thought so rudimental and so plain,
That none by comment could it plainer make.
All faith was one : in object, not in kind
The difference lay. The faith that saved a soul,
And that which in the common truth believed,
In essence were the same. Hear then what faith,
True Christian faith, which brought salvation, was :
Belief in all that God revealed to men ;
Observe — in all that God revealed to men ;
In all he promised, threatened, commanded, said,
Without exception, and without a doubt.
Who thus believed, being by the Spirit touched,
As naturally the fruits of faith produced
Truth, temperance, meekness, holiness and love,
As human eye from darkness sought the light.”

As faith is an act of the mind resting on evidence, and as the mind is voluntary in collecting, weighing, and admitting or rejecting evidence, so unbelief is a sin of no small magnitude, for it condemns the world and excludes from heaven. But the voluntary act of the unrenewed mind is not all the Gospel requires, for it leaves man still opposed to God, without his grace and without hope in the world. The Gospel requires that faith which is a fruit of the Spirit — a supernatural principle which produces a cordial approbation of the Gospel and of Christ, as our divine Redeemer. This is more than an assent of the mind. It includes a living principle which produces a concurrence of the will,

or an exercise of the heart embracing the truth believed, and trusting in the glorious object revealed. Hence "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

This faith is described in Scripture by various metaphors ; — as, looking to Christ ; coming to him ; receiving him ; resting and trusting in him ; eating his flesh and drinking his blood, without which we can have no spiritual life in us. Then when man believes with the heart, he obtains an interest in the object of his faith ; Christ becomes his Saviour altogether lovely ; and he devotes himself wholly to his service. This faith gives the believer such views of Christ as make him commit himself entirely to his most tender care and wise disposal. It makes him rely on his infinite mercy, goodness, truth and faithfulness, as a child relies on its parent for guidance, protection, provision, and everything. It makes him feel secure and happy in his presence and in his care ; and lament his absence and his frowns. Conscious of his own absolute need, and of his entire inability to save himself, he in whom it dwells surrenders all to Christ, and relies on him with child-like confidence. Conscious of his sins and utter unworthiness, and of the willingness, merits and all-sufficiency of Christ Jesus, he throws himself as a suppliant at his feet, and relies for salvation on Jesus, who is worthy to receive power, and riches, and wis-

dom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. This faith is the soul of religion—the foundation of all holy and acceptable obedience. Without it we cannot please God, and without it there is no salvation. It makes life a blessing—inspires with hope when all earthly hopes vanish, and throws over the decay of nature the most gorgeous of all lights. It awakens life even in death, and from its shade calls up beauty, and divinity, and immortality. While unbelief sees only gloom and despair, it ascends above flame and torture, and brings everlasting joys from the Paradise of God. O, Lord, may it be given to us in behalf of Jesus Christ to believe on his name. O, give us this precious appropriating and triumphing faith. Fulfill in us all the good pleasure of thy goodness and the work of faith with power. Lord, we believe; help thou our unbelief. Lord, increase our faith; make us strong in the faith, giving glory to thee. Faith is thy gift.

“*Faith* is the Spirit’s sweet control,

From which assurance springs;

Faith is the pencil of the soul

That pictures heavenly things.

Faith is the conqu’ring host that storms

The battlements of sin;

Faith is the quick’ning fire that warms

The trembling heart within.

O, Rock of Ages, Fount of Bliss,

Thy needful help afford,

And let our constant prayer be *this*—

Increase my *Faith*, O Lord.”

FAITH IS ESSENTIAL TO SALVATION, BECAUSE BY IT ALONE WE OBTAIN THE PROMISES. "To Abraham and his seed were the promises made." Ga. iii: 16. To the Israelites pertained "the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises." Ro. ix: 4. God promised Abraham and his seed the land of Canaan for a possession, and they said, "We will go to the place which God has promised." But how did they obtain these precious promises? An answer to this question is found in the exhortation of the Apostle: "Be ye followers of them who through *faith* and patience inherit the promises." Of those ancient worthies he says: "These all died in the faith, not having received the promises; but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them." He. xi: 13. Through *faith* they obtained the promises. But the land of promise, confirmed to Abraham by the covenant and oath of God, was only a type of a better inheritance, even of heaven; and for this cause Jesus is "the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the First Testament, they which are called might receive the promise of *eternal inheritance*." He. ix: 15. So to us are given exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature; and if partakers of that nature, then, consequently, partakers of all the infinite bless-

ings flowing from it. Now the sum of these promises is final salvation, or eternal life, according to his word. "This is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life." 1 Jn. ii: 25. "The promise is to you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." But how do we obtain, embrace and inherit the promises except by faith? Certainly, there is no other means or way by which they can become ours; for the objects of faith are future and invisible things. Such was the promised land to which the Israelites marched through the howling wilderness. God in all his perfections — Jesus in all his excellence — Heaven with all its glories and joys, are future and invisible objects, seen, pursued and obtained only by that faith, which pierces the veil of the invisible world, and brings Heaven with all its bliss before its far-reaching eye. "Faith," says Jeremy Taylor, "is a certain image of eternity. All things are present to it. Things past, and things to come, are all so before the eyes of faith, that he in whose eyes that candle is enkindled, beholds Heaven as present, and sees how blessed a thing it is to die in God's favor, and to be chimed to our grave with the music of a good conscience. Faith converses with angels, and antedates the hymns of glory." How happy is the believer, who makes the promise of eternal life his own by an appropriating act of faith! How happy is he who appropriates Christ with all his unsearchable

riches to his own soul, and like Enoch walks with God by faith, though neglected and despised by all the unbelieving world! "What blessed sights does he daily see! What ravishing tidings, what pleasant melody does he daily hear! What delectable food does he daily taste! He sees by faith the God, and the glory, which the blessed Spirits see at hand by nearest intuition. He sees that in a glass, and darkly, which they behold with open face. He sees the glorious majesty of his Creator; the eternal King; the Cause of causes; the Composer; Upholder; Preserver and Governor of all worlds. He beholds the wonderful methods of his providence; and what he cannot reach to see, he admires, and waits for the time when that also shall be open to his view. He sees by faith the world of spirits; the hosts that attend the throne of God; their perfect righteousness; their full devotedness to God; their ardent love; their flaming zeal; their ready and cheerful obedience; their dignity and shining glory, in which the least of them exceeds that which the disciples saw on Moses and Elias, when they appeared on the holy mount and talked with Christ. He hears by faith the Heavenly concert; the high and harmonious song of praise; the joyful triumphs of crowned saints; the sweet commemorations of things that were done, and suffered on earth with the praises of Him that redeemed them by his blood, and made them kings and priests to God. In beholding this

celestial glory, some beams do penetrate his breast, and so irradiate his longing soul, that he is changed thereby into the same image from glory to glory." (*Baxter.*)

As in the natural, so in the spiritual world, some things are known and received only on testimony. By our senses we are acquainted with the natural world. By consciousness we are assured of our existence. By reasoning we deduce one truth from another, but a great part of our knowledge is derived from testimony : as our knowledge of countries, cities, nations, and things we never saw. The same is true of the perfections of Jehovah, and the predictions of his word. Human foresight and human reason could never discover such truths. Such knowledge is too wonderful for us ; it is high ; we cannot attain unto it. Hence, we must receive it on the testimony of Scripture ; and if we receive the witness of man, the witness of God is greater and should command our unshaken confidence. Here, there is no possibility of mistake, and our belief relates to things of the utmost importance—things which no eye has seen or can see, but which God has laid up for them that love him. Of these things faith is the evidence, and the conviction of their reality is as strong in the mind of the believer in the full exercise of faith, as if they were present to his senses. It is not in these as it is in temporal things, which concern and employ the men of the world, who think nothing

is important which is not seen and felt and enjoyed in this life. Believers are by them counted fools, who neglect the substance and grasp at the shadow and a world they never saw. But the rewards of the believer lie beyond the narrow vale of time. He looks at things that are unseen and eternal, and plainly declares he seeks a better country, and a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Of these invisible things we have no knowledge, except by revelation. They are objects of faith, and we believe their existence on the testimony of God. We believe the account revelation gives of the divine character, and of our own. We believe that God is love—omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent—merciful and gracious, and ready to forgive—not willing that any should perish, but that all should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth, and that he has given his Son to be the Saviour of the world. Faith gives its cordial assent to the truths of revelation on the veracity of Him who cannot lie—not a cold and speculative assent, but one which includes a concurrence of the heart, and influences the conduct with reference to the realities of eternity. Many who profess to believe the Gospel, render only a vague and passive assent to the things which they have been told. They do not feel disposed to call them in question, nor do they inquire whether or not their faith is that of the Gospel, sincere, cordial and operative. Nay, it does

not amount to a practical conviction; for it has no influence on their lives, and they do not really believe the truths which they profess.

True faith produces a full conviction of divine truth, and the ground of this conviction is the infallible testimony of God himself. It is assured that what he has attested must be true; for he is omniscient and cannot be mistaken; holy and will not deceive. This assurance is not always found in the mind of believers, but it belongs to the nature of faith—is attainable and is found in Christian experience. Faith exists in imperfect beings, where its full exercise is often hindered. Conscious guilt, and the remains of depravity in the heart—the temptations of Satan—the appearances of Providence, and “the suspension of divine influence for the sins into which they have fallen, may involve Christians in mental distress, and lead them to call in question truths to which in their happier hours they yielded an unwavering assent.” “O, thou of little faith; wherefore didst thou doubt?” When these obstacles are removed, and the believer fixes his undivided attention on the faithfulness of God, he feels the same assurance of the truths of religion, however mysterious and contrary to the natural suggestions of the mind, as he does of his own existence, or that of the natural world. No conviction could be stronger than Abraham’s, when without hesitation he offered up Isaac, on whose life the promises depended, and yet continued

to hope for the blessing exhibited in them — when “against hope he believed in hope.” This is faith in its full exercise. It is for our imitation, and implies it may be found. It supports and cheers the heart in the darkest hours of adversity, knowing that the invisible hand which rules over all will do right.

“Faint not! There is who rules the storm, whose hand
Feeds the young ravens, nor permits blind chance
To close one sparrow’s flagging wing in death.
Trust in the Rock of Ages. Now, even now,
He speaks, and all is calm. Or, if to prove
Your inmost soul, the hurricane still spread
Its licensed ravages. He whispers hope,
Earnest of comfort; and through blackest night
Bids keen-eyed *Faith* on heaven’s pure sunshine gaze,
And learn the glories of her future home.”

It makes the truths of revelation exert an influence on the mind as if they were present to the senses. It views them as realities, and is suitably affected by them. They often overwhelm the mind, and lead the believer to abandon the affairs of the world as unworthy of his attention. Seen by faith, they produce strong emotions in his heart, and give new direction to his conduct, as if seen by the natural eye. He walks by faith, not by sight; and under its influence renounces the pleasures of sin for those of religion. He abandons the world, as his portion, for the inheritance of heaven. “The sacrifices which a Christian has often made, of his will, his ease, his honor, his wealth,

his friends, and even his life, are proof of the mighty power of faith. These are the trophies which adorn its triumphs — this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith.” It makes all the doctrines of revelation bear on his mind, so as to promote his conformity to the will of God, and his final salvation. It is conversant with things past, present, and to come — things of terror, and things of peace to the soul — the threatenings of the law, and the promises of the Gospel. It moves with fear, and animates with hope — excites to duty, and supports in adversity. It fortifies against temptation — resists the assaults of Satan — overcomes the world, and endures to the end in holy obedience.

“ Behold the chamber where the Christian sleeps,
And where, from year to year, he prays and weeps ;
Whence, in the midnight watch, his prayers arise
To those bright mansions where his treasure lies.
How near it is to all that *Faith* can see ;
How short and peaceful may his passage be !
One beating pulse, one feeble struggle o’er,
May open wide the everlasting door.
Yes, for that bliss unspeakable, unseen,
Is ready, and the veil of flesh between
A gentle sigh may rend, and then display
The broad full splendor of an endless day.
This bright conviction elevates his mind,
He presses forward, leaving all behind.
Thus from his throne, the tyrant foe is hurl’d —
This is the *Faith* that overcomes the world.”

FAITH IS ESSENTIAL TO SALVATION, BECAUSE IT IS AN INDISPENSABLE BOND OF UNION TO CHRIST. He and his people are legally one. He is the head; they are the members of his mystical body, and by virtue of this union, his righteousness is counted theirs in law. It is received by faith. They are chosen in him, accepted in him, and through him obtain eternal life. The union subsisting between Christ and his people is real, intimate and mystical; similar to that which subsists between his divine and human natures, yet differing in this, that it does not constitute them one person with him. It consists in a close relation of different persons, and is illustrated in Scripture by various similes, as that of the tree and its branches—the foundation and the building—the husband and the wife—the head and the members. He says “I am the vine, ye are the branches.” “To whom coming as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious; ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house.” 1 Pe. ii: 4, 5. “The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church, and he is the Saviour of the body”—“We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.” Ep. v: 23, 30. He is the head of government and of influence. He lives in them, and they in him, “till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of fullness of

Christ. Speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things which is the head : even Christ, from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Ep. iv : 13, 15, 16. He is the glorious king, head and husband of the Church, which is represented as a queen standing by his side, arrayed in garments, decked with embroideries of gold.

" Among thy women honorable
Kings' daughters were at hand ;
Upon thy right hand did the queen
In gold of Ophir stand."

The bonds of this mystical and happy union are the *Spirit* and *faith*. "He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit." "For by our Spirit are we all baptised into one body, whether we be Jews, or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." 1 Cor. xii : 13. "Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he has given us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." Paul prays that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith. Ep. iii : 17. He says : "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." Ga. ii : 20. This is the firm bond which unites all the

children of peace, to Christ their living head. It unites them in the bond of religion, discipline and hope ; in the same Spirit ; in love, interest and aim. His Spirit dwells in them, and they receive him by faith. He lives in them, and they abide in him as the branch abides in the vine without which it can bear no fruit. "There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." *Ep. iv : 4-6.* Though of different ages, climes, languages, pursuits and conditions in life, yet they are all united by the same bond and actuated by the same Spirit ; and by virtue of this bond they receive Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. As the various parts of the universe are united by one mysterious chain, so all the members of Christ's mystical body are united by faith to Him, their living head, from whom they receive all their life, beauty and glory.

" The glorious universe around,
The heavens with all their train,
Sun, moon and stars, are firmly bound
In one mysterious chain.

In one fraternal bond of love,
One fellowship of mind,
The saints below, and saints above,
Their bliss and glory find.

Here, in their house of pilgrimage,
Thy statutes are their song;
There, through one bright eternal age,
Thy praises they prolong!

Lord, may our *union* form a part
Of that thrice happy whole,
Derive its pulse from Thee, the heart,
Its life from Thee, the soul."

The mysterious chain which binds the universe in one grand system will be dissolved in flames, but this bond is indissoluble. It outlives death and the judgment, and revives with increasing vigor through eternity. The soul will survive the body and wing its way to mansions of endless bliss in the bosom of Jesus. The body will be reduced to dust, yet even then it will be united to Christ as a part of his mystical body, as his divine and human natures were united when he lay in the tomb. Believers die in the Lord. They sleep in Jesus, and those that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him at his coming. As faith is a bond of union to Christ, and inseparably connected with salvation, it will "revive beyond the grave and with new vigor and perfection. With every new display of divine excellence and created worth, it will rise higher and higher without end. The mind in which it exists will, in every stage of its progress, become wiser, nobler, better and happier. Heaven, in all its concerns, its inhabitants and dispensations, will, from its influ-

ence, assume, without intermission, a brighter aspect ; and the immense eternal kingdom of Jehovah continually become a more and more perfect mirror, reflecting with increasing splendor his supreme excellence and glory.”—(*Dwight.*)

“ *Faith!* anchor of the soul amid the storms
Which vex and toss the ocean deep ; which forms
The pathway to that land of light and love,
Which waits the ransom’d in the world above ;
While this life lasts, I fain would stay on thee ;”
Be mine on earth, and through eternity.

FAITH IS ESSENTIAL TO SALVATION, BECAUSE THE SCRIPTURES ABSOLUTELY REQUIRE IT as a means of obtaining an interest in the salvation offered in the Gospel. Hence Jesus says “Repent ye and believe the Gospel.” Mk. i : 15. “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.” Jno. iii : 36. “If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.” Without faith it is impossible to please God — without faith there is no union to Christ ; and without it there is no salvation. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.” The reverse of this is equally true : disbelieve, and ye shall be lost. Nothing can relieve the criminal condemned to die except belief in the authentic information that his sovereign is willing to pardon him. Neither can anything relieve the criminal condemned at the bar of

Jehovah except an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ abounding to the chief of sinners — nothing except belief in Christ as lifted up on the cross — as having borne our sins in his own body on the tree ; as having made atonement by his blood, and brought in everlasting righteousness for a ground of hope to those who have no hope in themselves. Jesus is the only hope and refuge set before us, and by faith the believer flees to him as the man-slayer under the law fled to the cities of refuge. Feeling that he has no hope in himself, he lays hold of Christ, and commits the whole work of his salvation into his hands. He forms no treacherous alliance with works as a partial cause of acceptance with God, but lays his whole foundation of hope, and peace, and joy, in Christ alone ; for “to him that worketh is the reward reckoned, not of grace, but of debt ; but to him that worketh not but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness.” Ro. iv : 4, 5. He receives Christ by faith without offering any price in exchange for so great a gift. Faith and works are in opposition to each other. “He who believes does not work that he may live ; perform duties with a view to obtain the divine favor ; associate his own obedience with that of the Redeemer as the ground of his justification. He simply believes ; he receives the testimony of God concerning his Son, and expects salvation through him alone.” His faith enables him to view that testimony

as bearing the signature of Heaven ; as worthy of all acceptance, and as the only truth which deserves his most serious attention. It brings the word of God home to his heart in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. Then he relies on Him alone, whose arm brought salvation, and who claims the undivided honor of that great work which he finished alone on Calvary. He may not at first be able to say that Christ is his in *possession*, yet he believes that Christ is his in the *offer* of the Gospel ; and when his faith is in full exercise, he can say that Christ died for him in particular—that his sins are forgiven—that his Redeemer lives, and nothing shall separate him from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The true Christian may be troubled with many doubts and fears even through life ; he may wait long and conflict with many difficulties, before he be a partaker of the assurance of faith ; and those of little faith should not be distressed with the melancholy thought that they are unbelievers, but should pray God to increase their faith, and should earnestly strive for that assurance which is attainable, and which alone will satisfy the longing soul. The exhortations, “Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith,” — “Let us draw near to God with a true heart in full assurance of faith,” imply assurance is attainable. It may not be obtained from the direct act of faith, but it is obtained from “the promises of salvation ; the inward evidence

of those graces unto which those promises are made, the testimony of the Spirit of adoption witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God; which Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance whereby we are sealed to the day of redemption." This may be called the assurance of sense, or the assurance that we have believed. The assurance of faith arises from "the single view of what is contained in the word of promise; but the assurance of sense arises from the joint view of God's word without us, and from his work within us" — or from the Spirit shining on his own work in the soul. "The assurance of sense is founded on evidences, and supposes actual progress in holiness." The assurance of faith is founded on the word of God. By an assured faith in that word, the Israelites marched through the wilderness to the land of promise, and obtained the full assurance of sense when they got possession of that land which flowed with milk and honey. So, by an assured faith in the promises of God, the believer journeys through this vale of tears to Immanuel's land, and will have the full assurance of sense when he gets that glorious land in possession, receives the end of his faith, and with transports of joy sweetly sings his triumphant song of deliverance. Speaking of assurance in the nature of faith, the pious Hervey says, "I do not affirm that, without a full assurance, there is no faith, but this I maintain, that wherever the latter exists, there will be a sincere pursuit

of the former." Besides other reasons for so few obtaining this great blessing — assurance — he assigns these namely: "They understand not the perfect *freeness* of grace, nor the *immense* merits of Christ; they do not consider the unspeakable value of an assured faith; neither are they aware it is intended for *sinful men as such*."

O, what an unspeakable blessing it is to have our interest in Christ ascertained, and call him our own! Then our sorrows will flee away — all nature will smile, and peace and joy reign in our souls. If, when under a deep sense of sin, and great anxiety for deliverance, and for assurance that Christ is ours, God graciously answers our cries by saying: Christ is yours in the offer of the Gospel; and enables us to receive and appropriate him in all his divine fullness to our souls, then joy unspeakable will arise in our hearts; our troubled souls will be at rest, and be filled with that divine love which passes all understanding. We know this declaration is true, and we also know, that —

"When Faith presents the Saviour's death,
And whispers, this is thine;
Sweetly, my rising hours advance,
And peacefully decline.

While such my views, the radiant sun
Sheds a most sprightly ray;
Each object smiles, all nature charms —
I sing my cares away."

“ When I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies,
I'll bid farewell to every fear,
And wipe my weeping eyes.”

But O, cries one, I am *so unworthy*—my sins are *so great* and *numberless*, I dare not believe and call the promise of salvation mine ! This pitiful objection arises from mistake of the Gospel, and has no foundation in the Scriptures. Nowhere do they exclude any one on the ground of his unworthiness, and great sins ; but on the contrary, they invite the chief of sinners—the stout-hearted that are far from righteousness—the scarlet-colored and crimson-dyed sinner—to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and he shall be saved. It is in the character of sinners, destitute of all good and previous qualifications, that you are invited to come to Christ for rest to your souls. What good was there in the woman of Samaria—in Zaccheus the publican—in the Philippian jailer—in Saul of Tarsus ; or what good is there in any sinner to commend him to the divine favor ? None, verily none ; but everything to the contrary. The Gospel warrants us to come to Christ, as sinners destitute of all good, helpless and ready to perish. It warrants the vilest, in the most desperate case, to look to Jesus Christ for salvation. It declares, he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance—he came to seek and to save that which was lost. In the plainest language

he cries "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth" — "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" — "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." O, what free and gracious invitations are these from Him who suffered, the Just for the unjust that he might bring us to God! Jesus died for the *ungodly*. He prays sinners to become reconciled to God; and when the sinner comes to him, he does not come because he thinks himself better than others, or has some good in himself, but as unworthy and destitute of all good, he comes relying on the divine testimony and on Christ, as the ground of his confidence, and hope of acceptance with the Father. He renounces self and every other vain hope; cleaves to Christ as his only hope and refuge from the storm, and rejoices in him as his Saviour, able and willing to save to the uttermost. Then a new scene opens to his view: he beholds with amazement how God can be just, and yet the Justifier of the *ungodly*. The everlasting covenant opens its infinite stores to his ravished eye — the Gospel pours its healing balm into his bleeding heart, and wounded conscience. Jesus and his righteousness, are now his only hope and plea. Though before trembling, and confounded because of his dreadful sins and utter unworthiness, he now sees an all-sufficiency in Christ to give him rest, and peace and eternal life through the riches of his free and

unmerited grace, abounding to the chief of sinners. With joy he bows before his throne of grace, and with heart-felt gratitude adores that God whose arm has brought deliverance and made him differ from those who perish in unbelief.

O, sinner! why do you object, or complain, since Christ is so freely and so fully offered to you in the Gospel? Complaints and objections will only increase your difficulty. Only believe in the free promise of God to you, and all will be peace and serenity in your soul. Your troubles will vanish, and your sins will be washed away in the atoning blood of the Lamb. In the language of James Hervey: "Shall we pore upon our blemishes, and fasten our eyes upon our wounds? This will increase our anguish. But let us turn our eyes to Him who was typified by the brazen serpent. By his stripes we are healed. He that diverts his attention from this sublimely excellent object, must unavoidably fall into perplexity and distress. Did we steadfastly believe in our Incarnate God — believe that every one of our iniquities is laid on him — that whatever he did and suffered for the redemption of sinners, he did and suffered for us — that Christ, the Lord of Glory, is made to us righteousness; — were we rooted and grounded in this belief, how would it cheer our thoughts! how would it draw the thorn from our conscience, and pour the balm of heaven upon our souls! This faith is a source

—is the only source of substantial and lasting joy. When I depart from this precious truth — *assurance by the direct act of faith*, I fall into darkness and distress; but when looking for no evidences in myself, I depend on the free promise of God in his word; when regarding myself only as a poor sinner, I confidently trust in Christ as my righteousness and salvation, then light beams forth, and joy springs up. Pardon is mine, grace is mine; Christ, with all his spiritual blessings, is mine. Why? because I am conscious of sanctifying operations in my own breast? Rather, because God has spoken in his holiness; because all these precious privileges are consigned over to me, *as a sinner*, in the everlasting Gospel, with a clearness as unquestionable as the truth — with a certainty unavoidable as the oath of God. Bless the Lord, O my soul, that a sinner, such a vile sinner, should be allowed to take Christ and all salvation as my own, and thus to assure myself of pardon, holiness and glory.”

But you draw another objection from *human inability*. You say, faith is the gift of God — a supernatural act of the regenerate man, and therefore you cannot believe without divine aid. It is freely admitted that this is a serious objection, yet it must also be admitted that to believe on Jesus Christ is a duty enjoined by the highest authority; and this objection operates equally against repentance and prayer, and every other

duty, and against the use of means in the natural and spiritual worlds. Without divine aid, man cannot make the fruits of the earth grow any more than he can repent, or believe, or pray, or sing with the spirit and with the understanding. But he can use the means for bringing forth the fruits of the earth, and for obtaining faith, and repentance, and salvation. You have the facilities and the faculties for collecting, weighing and admitting, or rejecting evidence, and you have the divine veracity on which to rely; hence, faith and unbelief, as they are acts of the mind, are grounds of praise or dispraise, of reward or punishment. It was because of unbelief that the Israelites could not enter the promised land, and it is for the same reason that the unbeliever will be excluded from heaven. Remember, faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God; and he requires nothing of us but what is reasonable and just, and nothing for which we may not look to him for seasonable aid. To repent and believe the Gospel—to turn to God and live, and to make us a new heart, are equivalent duties. But while God requires them, he requires us to ask his aid. While he requires a new heart, he promises “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you,”—“But for this will I be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them.” *Ez. xxxvi: 26, 37.* Thus he meets our commanded duty by his promise of assistance: “My grace is sufficient for thee, for my

strength is made perfect in weakness." 2 Cor. xii : 9. Now must you stand still and do nothing because your faculties are weakened, your understanding darkened, your will perverted, and your conscience defiled by sin? O, no, your lot is cast in a land enlightened by the Gospel, which invites you to come to Jesus as poor, sinful, destitute and helpless creatures, that you may obtain all the blessings of his grace. Is it not your duty to press through the crowd and touch at least the hem of his garment? Bartimeus could not heal his blindness, nor the leper his leprosy, nor the woman her issue of blood. They all felt their inability; yet they cried to Christ for help, and obtained it. The Israelites, with the raging enemy behind them, the impassable mountains on each side, and the merciless waves before them; the disciples at the grave of Lazarus, and the man with the withered hand, all felt their inability to go forward, or to raise the dead, or to stretch forth the helpless hand, but they could all cry to God for help. The disciples could roll away the stone from the grave's mouth, and so you can read the word, hear the Gospel, cry to God, and use the means of his appointment, and then leave the result with him, as they did, and as the husbandman does after using the means for obtaining the fruits of the earth. Only believe, and you shall see the salvation of the Lord. Pray for that strong, victorious faith which removes all objections, surmounts all difficulties,

and relies with confidence on the free promises of Him whose arm has brought salvation.

“ O for a strong and lasting faith
To credit what th’ Almighty saith ;
T’ embrace the promise of his Son,
And call the joys of heav’n our own.”

Faith is the shield which quenches the fiery darts of the Wicked One — the victory which overcomes the world — the tie which binds the believer to his God, draws all his life, peace and joy from him, and gives all the glory to the exceeding riches of his grace.

Let us look at the triumphs of faith by Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses and Rahab, Gideon, and Barak, and Samson, and Jephthae, and David, and Samuel, and the prophets, “ who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.” Let us be encouraged by their example to embrace the promises, and through the varied scenes of life rest on the blessed Saviour, showing that, like those ancient worthies of whom the world was not worthy, and for whom God prepared a better country,

“ We walk by *faith*, and not by sight,
Along this vale of tears ;
Till our wrapt souls shall wing their flight
To Heaven’s unclouded spheres.

Triumphant then o'er sin and death,
 We'll praise our living Head;
 And looking back, behold the path,
 Through which we have been led."

While faith and works are essential to salvation, they are not *the meritorious* cause of it. A man has no merit in receiving alms, nor a sinner in receiving faith, for it is the gift of God, and so excludes merit. All the glory of our salvation belongs to the great Author. In the day of judgment good works will be mentioned merely as an evidence of that faith which entitles man to eternal life; which gives him a right or privilege to the Tree of Life, as a gracious reward, and excites to holy obedience in this world. The apostles Paul and James speak of men being justified; the one by faith, and the other by works. The faith of which Paul speaks, is the gift of God — a living, active, purifying principle which excites to universal obedience; but the faith which James condemns, is "a dead faith, a body without the soul — a faith which is exhausted in an empty profession, and which he therefore compares to the inefficient charity, which entertains the hungry and naked with compassionate words; but neither feeds nor clothes them." These apostles do not speak of the same kind of faith; nor of the same kind of justification. Paul speaks of justification before God, freely by his grace. James treats of justification before men, evinced by works. The truth of

this appears from the cases to which he refers. He inquires: Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered Isaac, his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with works, and by works was faith made perfect? Now thirty years before this he was justified before God, and "his faith was counted to him for righteousness." Ge. xv: 6. But men are not justified twice, hence this second justification must refer to his justification before men, as an evidence of his faith, and acceptance with God, and thus his faith was evinced and made perfect by his works. "Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?" But she received them by *faith*. He. xi: 31. How she came to believe in God, we are not told, and yet because she did believe in him, she received the spies, and thus she was justified before God before their arrival, and her justification by works was an evidence of her faith in God. Then this apostle teaches that by a mere "profession of faith, we can not know a man to be in a state of favor with God; but by a profession accompanied with such good works as evince its sincerity" — "yea a man may say, thou hast faith, and I have works; show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works. For as the body without the Spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

Good works are not confined to acts of sobriety, justice, charity, and benevolence ; but they extend to all the requirements of the moral law. They flow from love to God, and are done for his glory. They are strictly found only in those who are renewed by the Holy Spirit, and united to the Lord Jesus, who says : “ Without me ye can do nothing ” — “ I am the vine, ye are the branches ; as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me.” Good works being found in imperfect beings, are also imperfect ; for “ I have not found thy works perfect before God.” Re. iii : 2 Believers are exhorted to be careful to maintain good works, and according as they have opportunity and ability ; they are required to do good to all men, especially to the household of faith. All men exert an influence for good, or for evil, in the world, and a cup of cold water, or even a good intention, will in no wise lose its reward. 2 Ch. vi : 8 ; 2 Co. vii : 12.

But if salvation is by grace, and neither by faith nor by works, as the *meritorious* and *procuring cause*, why must faith be exercised, and works be performed ? Because *God requires them.* *They are due to him for his numberless favors.* *They promote his glory, and commend religion to others.* *They are intimately connected with salvation, and tend to promote it.* *They are an evidence of grace in the heart — of union to Christ, and of the sincerity of faith.* *They will be*

produced in the day of judgment as an evidence of our faith, and title to eternal life; and for omitting them, the wicked will be condemned to everlasting punishment. Mt. xxv.

Then work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; and when you have done all that is required, say, you are “unprofitable servants:” for it is God that “worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” Work with all diligence, as men search for silver and for hid treasure. Work without delay — in faith, and hope, and love, and patience, and perseverance. Lay aside every weight — be faithful unto death, and you shall receive a crown of life. Work while it is day; for the night cometh, when no man can work.

The connection between our duty to work, and God working in us of his own good pleasure, must not be forgotten and overlooked. His pleasure is the motive of his working in us. It excludes human merit and boasting. It humbles our pride, and gives God the glory of our salvation. We have nothing which we have not received, and hence have not whereof to glory. “Let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord.” Revelation and experience prove that our salvation originates with God and is carried on to the end by his almighty power; and when the principle of grace is formed in our hearts, we coöperate with God in this great work. His working does not at all supersede

the necessity of our working, but is the reason why we can and must work. Jesus says, "Because I live, ye shall live also" — "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." Then, if the life we live in the flesh be by faith in Christ — if we are united to him as the branch to the vine, we will work and bear fruit unto life everlasting. In the language of the Rev. John Wesley, "God works in you ; therefore, you can work ; otherwise it would be impossible. If he did not work, it would be impossible for you to work out your own salvation. With man this is impossible, says our Lord, for a rich man to enter the kingdom of Heaven, yea, it is impossible for any man, unless God work in him, seeing all men are by nature not only sick, but dead, in trespasses and sins ; it is impossible for them to do anything well till God raises them from the dead. It was impossible for Lazarus to come forth till the Lord gave him life, and it is equally impossible for us to come out of our sins, yea, or to make the least motion towards it, till He who has all power in heaven and earth, calls our dead souls into life. * * * Yet this is no excuse for those who continue in sin and lay the blame on their Maker by saying, it is God only that must quicken us, for we cannot quicken our own souls. * * As God works in you, you are now able to work out your own salvation. God works, therefore you must work — must be workers together with him. * * * We know, indeed, that word of his to be absolutely true ; without

me, ye can do nothing. But, on the other hand, we know every believer can say, I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me. * * * God has joined these together in the experience of every believer. * * We must beware of that mock humility which teaches us to say in excuse for our willful disobedience, Oh, I can do nothing, and stop there, without once naming the grace of God." Augustine makes this just remark: "He that made us without ourselves, will not save us without ourselves. He will not save us unless we save ourselves from this untoward generation — unless we ourselves fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life — unless we agonize to enter in at the strait gate; deny ourselves and take up our Cross daily, and labor by every possible means to make our calling and election sure." Then since God works in you, be never weary in well-doing. Your labor shall not be in vain in the Lord. Let your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope be manifest to all men. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in Heaven. Faith and works go hand in hand, and you will at last be rewarded according to your works.

"If faith produce no works, I see
That faith is not a living tree.
Thus faith and works together grow,
No separate life they e'er can know:
They're soul and body, hand and heart —
What God hath joined, let no man part."

Now the great duties God requires of us are to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. "This is his commandment that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ." 1 Jno. iii: 23. Are we obeying this command? Or are we neglecting our own salvation? Remember Jesus will come in the glory of his Father with the holy angels, to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all them that believe. Then to you we would say as he once said to his disciples: "Do ye now believe?" and as he said to the Jews: "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." Every one must believe for himself; for none can go to Heaven by the faith of another person. Are we then of them who believe to the saving of the soul? Do we evince our faith by our works? Are we careful to maintain good works? Or is our faith dead—a body without a soul exhausting itself in vain professions? May God who is not unrighteous to forget our work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope, grant us faith, at least to touch the hem of Christ's garment, and we shall be made perfectly whole. O Lord, since thou hast said, "Ask and it shall be given you," we pray thee to give us faith to receive and appropriate Jesus Christ, with all his infinite benefits to our own souls; to surmount all the difficulties which lie in our way to glory; and to call the joys of Heaven *our own*. Fulfill in us all the

good pleasure of thy goodness, and the work of faith with power. O, give us assurance by the direct act of faith relying on the free and precious promises of thy word; and by the Holy Spirit shining on his own work in our souls. How rich is the believer, who has Jesus for his glorious Saviour; Heaven for his home, and God for his everlasting portion! How happy in the enjoyment of his favor! How safe under his protecting wing! Being united to Christ by a true and living faith, nothing can separate him from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord —“neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature.”

O, how precious is that faith which is the gift of God — the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen! What an important office does it perform in our salvation! It is the instrumental cause of justification — the indispensable bond of union to Christ, and the means of obtaining the promises, and the salvation offered in the Gospel. It is the holy and attractive principle which raises our souls from earth to heaven; unites us to the blessed Saviour, on whom we rely as our only hope and refuge. It works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world — produces holy affections, filial reverence, and universal obedience. It imparts peace to our troubled souls — overcomes the ills of life, the pressure of poverty, the

pains of persecution, and the gloom of the grave. It looks beyond the narrow vale of time to the land of promise ; surmounts all intervening difficulties, and brings immortal joys from the Paradise of God. It outlives death and the judgment, and will revive with new vigor and perfection in the immense and eternal kingdom of Jehovah. O, let us ever pray for this faith ! The humble, yet Scriptural assurance of faith in Jesus Christ, is the only source of true and lasting joy — the divine alchemy which turns all to gold — raises the believer above the fear of want, of torture, and of death — brings Heaven, with all its transcendent glory, before his ravished eyes, and assures him he shall dwell forever in the presence of the Lord, where is fullness of joy, and where are pleasures forevermore.

IX.

THE MEANS OF SALVATION.

“Behold His life, and learn from Him to live ;
In death still greater view thy dying Lord,
And imitate that worth thou canst not reach.
Smooth are his paths, and, to conduct thy feet,
The Gospel’s holy light around thee sheds
Its mild effulgence.”

In the spiritual, as in the natural world, God employs means to accomplish his vast designs, and work his sovereign will. By his Spirit he garnished the heavens. By the ark he saved Noah and his family from the vast ruin of the Old world. By the blood of the Paschal Lamb he saved his peculiar people from the miraculous and mournful slaughter of Egypt’s first-born. By the waters of Jordan he cleansed Naaman, the Syrian, of his leprosy. By the clay he opened the eyes of the man born blind ; and by means of his own appointment he opens our eyes and saves our souls from everlasting woe. The Word is the instrument of regeneration and the means of salvation ; and, for this reason, our Saviour says, “Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me” — “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.” Hence,

READING THE WORD IS A MEANS OF SALVATION. Fifteen hundred years before the Christian era, this Word, which is given by inspiration of God, was committed to writing by the hand of Moses, and afterwards by "holy men who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." It is a perfect and infallible rule of faith and practice for all men and all ages, and the means which God employs to lead us to the Saviour—to renew our souls after His own glorious image—to guide our feet in the way of peace, and promote the divine life in our souls. The Scriptures are able to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus, and it is from them that all other means of salvation—their authority and use, are derived, and their signs and symbols explained. By all their treasures of wisdom and excellence, they enlighten the mind, allure the heart, and gain the affections. They contain Law and Gospel, pure doctrines, eventful prophecies, important history, and displays of mercy and judgment. Here are treasures of wisdom and comfort to the soul, with all that pertains to life and godliness. The great theme is Jesus, and the redemption of man. They are "furnished with profound reasonings; short, prudential, moral and religious maxims; plain and pithy precepts; orations in form; poetry of every species, and every high degree of excellence; familiar letters; private journals; history, both general and biographical—together with most other approved models of communication."

The Law shows that we are sinners exposed to divine displeasure, and excites us to flee from the wrath to come. It shows what we owe our Creator, vindicates his holiness and justice, and makes us feel the necessity of righteousness and salvation by Jesus Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. It is the unerring rule of life — the infallible standard of holiness and morality, bearing on its features the signature of Him who rules over all and makes sinners trophies of his grace.

“ The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.

The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart.

The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes

The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever.

The judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether.”

In the language of an eminent writer, “the Law commands, and the Gospel promises. If the Law commands us to love the Lord our God with all our heart, the Gospel promises that he will circumcise our hearts to love him. If the Law commands us to repent, the Gospel promises the Spirit of grace and supplications, that we may mourn as for an only son, and be in bitterness as for a first-born. If the Law commands us to make to ourselves a new heart, God promises in the Gospel to take away the heart of stone, and give a heart of flesh. If the Law requires us to walk in all the ordinances and commandments of the Lord, this

is the promise of the Gospel: I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." (*John Dick, D. D.*)

The Gospel signifies good news—the history of Christ; his birth, doctrines, miracles, death, resurrection, and ascension; and hence is called, “The Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God.” Mk. i: 1. It signifies also the Christian revelation—the system of doctrines, ordinances and laws delivered unto us by its Author. It is called good news, because the great subject of which it treats is salvation, and the design of all its subordinate parts, is to conduct us to the enjoyment of perfect and endless felicity. In general, it contains doctrines, and promises, precepts and threatenings. But in particular, it signifies the revelation of grace, and mercy to sinners—joyful tidings of salvation through Christ Jesus, and in this sense, it proclaims nothing but good news to our fallen race. It offers pardon, liberty and consolation to sinners, and exhibits the righteousness of Christ as the foundation of their hopes. It contains the doctrines of Christianity, and the declarations of mercy founded on them. It informs us that God is love, and has proposed to save sinners through the atonement of his Son; and to send his Holy Spirit to apply, and seal pardon, and peace, and eternal life to our souls. It contains exceeding great and precious promises made to us, that we by

them might have hope. It offers Christ freely, and invites us to receive him in faith and love, that our souls may live forever. It assures us that God will pardon, sanctify and save all who believe, repent and seek his favor. How cheering — how full of mercy — of joy and consolation is the glorious Gospel to the awakened and anxious sinner !

It is by the Gospel, and not by the terrors of the Law, that sinners are converted and turned from Satan unto God, and from sin unto holiness. It is not the Law, but the Gospel which provides the great remedy for our souls. In every age, it has been the power of God unto salvation. Natural religion has never made a true convert to God, but the doctrine of the Cross has converted the desert into the garden of the Lord, made it glad with the songs of salvation, and rejoice and blossom as the rose. It has brought peace to the troubled conscience, and stilled the tumults of the distressed soul. It has sustained the Christian with patience, soothed his sorrows, brightened his hopes, and cheered his solitary hours in the prison and dungeon ; shed light in darkness ; dispelled the gloom of the grave, and led to glory, honor and immortality. It reveals the great remedy for the ills of the present life, and gives assurance of happiness in the life to come. It purifies the heart ; inspires with love to God, and through faith in Christ creates the love of holiness in the soul. It brings life and immortality

to light. It is an infallible guide to Heaven—the great light of the moral world, and the foundation of all true liberty and felicity in both worlds. Then, how appropriate is the injunction of the blessed Saviour, “Search the Scriptures”—read them daily, diligently, carefully, prayerfully, and in faith and love, hide them in your hearts, and exhibit them in your lives. The Bible is *the book* of learning, and civilization of religion, and salvation, around which cluster all our hopes of life and immortality. It is adapted to the feeblest intellect, and contains the highest order of literary merit for the man of genius and science. Nearly one-third of the Old Testament is written in the language and spirit of poetry, which is the language of nature, and the highest style of human speech, conveying “thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.”

Some specimens may here be given, to show that, in depth of thought, beauty, and sublimity of style, the Bible exceedingly surpasses all that is human. At the birth of creation, God said “Let there be light, and there was light.” When the foundations of the earth were laid, “the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” After the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, and the overthrow of their enemies in the Red Sea, Moses and the children of Israel sung their triumphant song of deliverance, “The Lord hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my

strength and song, and he is become my salvation." When Saul and Jonathan fell in battle on Mount Gilboa, David struck his harp in these sublime, yet mournful, strains :

“ The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places ;
How are the mighty fallen !
Tell it not in Gath,
Publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon ;
Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,
Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.
Ye mountains of Gilboa ! let there be no dew,
Neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings ;
For there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away,
The shield of Saul, as of one unanointed with oil.
From the blood of the slain,
From the fat of the mighty,
The bow of Jonathan turned not back,
And the sword of Saul returned not empty.
Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives,
And in their death they were not divided :
They were swifter than eagles,
They were stronger than lions.
Ye daughters of Israel ! weep over Saul,
Who clothed you in scarlet with other delights,
Who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel.
How are the mighty fallen in the midst of battle !
O Jonathan ! Thou wast slain in thy high places.
I am distressed for thee, my brother, Jonathan !
Very pleasant hast thou been unto me ;
Thy love to me was wonderful,
Passing the love of women.
How are the mighty fallen,
And the weapons of war perished !”

In the most touching language of pity and fervent prayer, Job describes his adverse and bereaved condition in contrast with the days of his prosperity, when he had the divine testimony that there was none like him on the earth, a perfect man, one that feared God and eschewed evil. In a perfect model of the pathetic and beautiful, he exclaims :

“ Oh, that I were as in months past,
As in the days when God preserved me ;
When his candle shined upon my head,
And by his light I walked through darkness ;
As I was in the days of my youth,
When the secret of God was upon my tabernacle ;
When the Almighty was yet with me ;
When my children were about me ;
When I washed my steps with butter,
And the rock poured me out rivers of oil.”

The state of the Church, before and after the coming of the Saviour, or the state of the sinner before and after conversion, is figuratively and beautifully described by Solomon in the tender language of a lover. The figure he employs for this description is drawn from the departure of winter, and the return of spring blooming in beauty. In the name of the Church, he says :

“ My Beloved spake, and said unto me,
Rise up my Love, my Fair One, and come away ;
For lo ! the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone ;

The flowers appear on the earth ;
The time of the singing of birds is come,
And the voice of the turtle is heard in our land ;
The fig tree putteth forth her green figs,
And the vines with the tender grape give a good smell.
Arise, my Love, my Fair One, and come away.’’

It is vain to search the poetry of ancient and modern times for a more vivid picture of the utter destruction of any land, than that which the prophet Jeremiah gives, in the following words, of the land of Judah :

“ I beheld the earth, and lo ! it was without form and void !
And the heavens, and they had no light !
I beheld the mountains, and lo ! they trembled !
And all the hills moved lightly !
I beheld, and lo ! there was no man !
And all the birds of the heavens were fled !
I beheld, and lo ! the fruitful place was a wilderness !
And all the cities thereof were broken down,
At the presence of the Lord,
And by his fierce anger.”

The supreme power of Jehovah marching as a conquering hero over the nations of the world — his transcendent glory and majesty, and his mysterious providence towards the Jewish nation, from the days of Moses down to their own time, are described by David and by Habakkuk in language at once devotional, pathetic, beautiful and sublime. In these exalted strains they sing of Jehovah :

“ He bowed the heavens also, and came down :
And darkness was under his feet.
And he rode upon a cherub and did fly ;
Yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.
He made darkness his secret place :
His pavilion round about him were dark waters,
And thick clouds of the skies.
At the brightness that was before him, his thick clouds passed
Hailstones and coals of fire.
The Lord also thundered in the heavens,
And the Highest gave his voice
Hailstones and coals of fire.
Yea, he sent out his arrows and scattered them ;
And he shot out lightnings and discomfited them.
Then the channels of the waters were seen,
The foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke,
O Lord, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils !”

“ God came from Teman,
And the Holy One from Mount Paran. *Selah*
His glory covered the heavens,
And the earth was full of his praise.
His brightness was like the sun,
And from his hand the rays shot forth,
And there was the hiding of his power
Before him went the pestilence,
And burning coals went forth at his feet.
He stood and measured the earth ;
He beheld, and drove asunder the nations ;
And the everlasting mountains were scattered ;
The perpetual hills did bow —
His ways are everlasting.
I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction ;
The curtains of the land of Midian did tremble.

Was the Lord displeased against the rivers?
Was thine anger against the rivers?
Was thy wrath against the sea?
That thou didst ride upon thy horses,
And thy chariots of salvation."

Now, is it not strange that a book of such vast importance to our well-being, and of such profound merit, sublimity and beauty, is so little read, and admired, and loved? Is it any wonder that for such a book, the excellent Hervey relinquished his favorite classics, and said of it: "O, blessed book! Our better, our spiritual sun, that sheddest thy bright beams upon our souls, and furnishes us with the light of life! Thou sovereign antidote against the delusions of the Devil, the treachery of our fallen nature, and the darkness of the world! No wonder that David counted his kingdom as nothing, and called Thee his heritage and portion forever, no wonder the holy martyrs parted with their estates, their families, their blood rather than with Thee. 'Tis rather to be wondered at, that mankind do not prize Thee as their richest jewel; converse with Thee as their sweetest companion; and talk of Thee as the dearest object of their love, all the day long. 'Tis with regret I leave off from speaking of thy unspeakable worth"—
"Away my Homer, I have no need of being entertained by you, since Job and the prophets furnish me with images much more magnificent, and lessons

infinitely more important. Away, my Horace, nor shall I suffer any loss by your absence, while the sweet singer of Israel tunes his lyre, and inspires me with the noblest strains of devotion; and even my prime favorite, my Virgil, may withdraw, since in Isaiah, I enjoy all his correctness of judgment, and all his beautiful propriety of diction." When John Selden, the most learned of English lawyers came to die, he said: "I have surveyed most of the learning that is among the sons of men, and my study is filled with books and manuscripts on various subjects, yet out of all these books and papers, I cannot recollect any passage whereon I can rest my soul, save one from the sacred Scriptures." How many like this eminent scholar have found that the Bible gives light in darkness, and brings to the troubled soul that peace which sustains it under all the ills of life, and the gloom of the grave! It is *the book* of books — the *book* of God to lead us safely through the journey of life to our eternal rest. If we do not follow its light, the fault must be our own, and our loss will be great beyond all finite conception.

"They might have understood, the bard replied:
They had the Bible. Hast thou ever heard
Of such a book? The author God himself;
The subject God and man, salvation, life,
And death; eternal life, eternal death!
Dread words! whose meaning has no end, no bounds,
Most wondrous book! bright candle of the Lord!

Star of eternity ! The only star
By which the bark of man could navigate
The sea of life, and gain the coast of bliss
Securely — only star that rose on Time,
And on its dark and troubled billows, still,
As generation, drifting swiftly by,
Succeeded generation, threw a ray
Of heaven's own light, and to the hills of God,
The eternal hills, pointed the sinner's eye."

PREACHING THE WORD IS A MEANS OF SALVATION. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mk. xvi : 15, 16. It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe, for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith. In his wisdom and goodness, he has appointed the ministry of reconciliation, and given pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints ; for the work of the ministry ; for the edifying of the body of Christ. For the encouragement of his servants, he gives this gracious promise : "Lo. I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world ;" and he gives his Holy Spirit to make the Gospel effectual in converting and saving souls. Nor has preaching the Gospel failed to save sinners. It has awakened the careless ; led the anxious to Christ ; comforted the disconsolate ; confirmed the wavering ; reclaimed the backslidden, and saved the lost. When the united ministry unfold the truths

of the Gospel — explain what is dark — solve what is difficult — reconcile what is seemingly contradictory, and bring forth out of the treasury of the Word things new and old, the mind is enlightened, the affections warmed, and the heart opened by the saving operations of the Holy Spirit. This divine agent removes the veil which hides the glories of the Gospel from the eye of the natural man and prevents its entrance into his heart. It is then no more foolishness to him. However much it is opposed to the opinions and inclinations of sinners, yet, under the divine blessing it will not fail to save their souls, for it is mighty through God. The doctrine of the Cross was opposed to all former systems of religion, yet it prevailed over all. It was a stumbling-block to the Jews, “because it proclaimed a suffering Messiah, a spiritual kingdom, and the admission of the Gentiles to the same privileges with the peculiar people. It was foolishness to the Greeks, because, setting aside their learned speculations, it called on them to acknowledge a God unknown to their ancestors, and a Mediator of whom they had never heard before, and to yield an unhesitating assent to doctrines new, strange, and inexplicable by the principles of philosophy.” It was and is opposed to the “Man of Sin who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped” — “who usurps the attributes and prerogatives of Deity, and claims authority to supersede the ordinances of

Heaven, and to establish his own in their room," who has extended his dominion from Rome over nations, and peoples, and tongues, and persecuted with unrelenting cruelty all who would not submit to his authority. But still the Gospel has commended itself to the hearts of all classes, and prevailed on them to devote themselves, with their time and talents and their all, to its interests. It is of God, and will prevail. Tacitus informs us that in the reign of Nero, thirty years after the death of Christ, there was "a great multitude of Christians in Rome, many of whom were cruelly put to death by that merciless tyrant." In the beginning of the second century, according to Pliny, the heathen temples were almost deserted in Bithynia. Thirty years after, Justin Martyr asserts "that there is not a nation, whether of Greeks or barbarians, or any other name, in which prayer and thanksgiving are not offered up to the Father and Maker of all things in the name of the crucified Jesus." In the latter part of the same century, Tertullian said to the Roman magistrates, "We are but of yesterday, and we have filled every place, your cities, garrisons and free towns, your camp, senate and forum; we have left nothing empty but your temples."

The object of preaching is to teach all nations the way of salvation by Jesus Christ, and turn them to the living God. For this purpose it was chosen and appointed by infinite wisdom and goodness; for this it

still exists, and it will promote its great and glorious end. It is the noblest of all ends, since it is to promote the divine glory, and the holiness and happiness of man. "For this end, he gave the Gospel, and established the ministry; for this he sent his Son to live and die, and rise again; and his Spirit to renew and sanctify the heart; to support and conduct sinners in the way to heaven." It is of the utmost importance, as the great means of salvation. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Blessed are they that hear the joyful sound of the Gospel; "yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it." Paul was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, "for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Ro. i: 16. He was a chosen vessel to bear Christ's name to the Gentiles and kings and children of Israel—to open their eyes, and to be a witness of the things which he had seen. It was by preaching the Gospel that the first converts to Christianity were made, and by it they will be made in every age. Preaching is still more interesting and impressive than reading the Word. The day devoted to it—the place, and the occasion, and the persons assembled, who are involved in the same guilt and danger, and have the same interests and duties—all tend to create interest, sympathy and feeling. One feels because those around him feel, and soon a common sympathy thrills the whole assembly. There

also, in Zion, God's honor dwells and his beauty shines. He delights to dwell in Zion more than in all the dwellings of Jacob, and has promised his blessing on the ministration of his word. What is the condition of a country where the Gospel is not preached? There the path of life is closed and God dishonored — woman is degraded in the scale of being — the wail of human woe is heard, and the soul bewildered and lost. So it is where men neglect and despise the Gospel. By careless and willful neglect they expose themselves to judicial blindness, and hardness of heart, and to eternal perdition. It must be admitted that preaching the Gospel has done more, and with less expense, than all human means and labor, to enlighten, reform and save the world. The Pulpit

“Must stand acknowledged while the world shall stand,
The most important and efficient guard,
Support and ornament of virtue's cause.”

This holds true, when from the pulpit, “all the words of this life”—“all the counsel of God” is declared in truth and faithfulness; not with the enticing words of man's wisdom; but with the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth—not with abstruse reasoning, nor vague harangues, which are unprofitable, often injurious, and seldom understood; but with plainness and perspicuity — not with monotony; but with that variety which abounds in nature and

revelation — not in the fear of man, and love of human applause ; but with that boldness which becomes an ambassador from the court of Heaven with a message to guilty men — not with levity of manner ; but with that solemnity which becomes the Gospel, the character of God, the excellency of Christ, the work of salvation, the depravity of man, and the exercise of mercy to perishing sinners — not in a cold, lifeless, drawling and unprepared manner ; but with earnestness, tenderness and affection. He who comes with a message so infinitely important and useful as that sent from God, should declare it with affection, tenderness and faithfulness. He comes on an errand of mercy to men guilty, and ruined, and exposed to infinite danger and hopeless suffering. “He comes to disclose the boundless mercy of God to mankind, as manifested in the condescension, life and death of the Redeemer ; in the forgiveness of sin, and the renovation of the soul ; in its safe conveyance through the dangers of this world, and its final admission into Heaven.” In declaring such awful truths, tenderness, solemnity and affection should characterize him who utters them, lest in declaring the doom of the sinner, he is pronouncing his own. He should speak as “a man who humbly hopes that he has obtained pardon for himself, and is most affectionately anxious,” that others may find the same blessing. He should travail in birth, till Christ be formed in their hearts the hope of glory.

Under the divine blessing the Word thus preached, will come "in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance," and will be an effectual means of converting and saving sinners. O, could we always realize the import of that precious promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," with what boldness and confidence would we preach the everlasting Gospel, and how differently would men hear it!

In hearing the Gospel, we should remember that we are sinners in absolute need of salvation — that in the Word only, the terms and means of salvation are stated, that they must be understood — that the opportunities of hearing are few — that the present is the best, and may be the last — that the Gospel contains all the rules of life, and that by it we will finally be judged. We should remember that God is a witness of how we hear the Gospel, which is worthy of all acceptance, and of being received with gratitude, faith and love. O, remember that our eternal all depends on it; our peace, holiness and happiness in life; hope and support in death; acquittal in judgment, and admission into Heaven. How must the impenitent sinner feel on a death-bed, when he remembers that he has neglected and slighted the Gospel and salvation forever! His life is fluttering over the awful abyss of ruin without end, and his soul about to appear before his Omniscient Judge, and be filled with the melancholy reflection,

that all the blessings of the Gospel, so fully and freely offered, have been despised, and now they are withdrawn, and the door of mercy forever barred against his admission. Remember that it is not enough that we have the Gospel, and hear it ; but we must believe its sublime truths, and live according to its holy precepts. We must receive with meekness the ingrafted word of God, which is able to save our souls ; or the Gospel will never be to us the savor of life unto life. Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it. “He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved, and this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come.” Mt. xxiv: 13, 14.

How honorable, arduous and responsible is the work of the holy ministry ! How important is it that an ambassador from the court of Heaven, negotiating between God and guilty men, should devote himself wholly to his sacred calling ! How sinful is it for him to slight his Master’s work ! How vain is that man who thinks he can serve God and the world ! Leaving the word of God and serving tables, or attaching to the ministry some secular employment, is contrary to the divine command, “Give thyself wholly to the ministry.” It reflects on divine wisdom — it is unprofitable to minister and people — it is positively injurious to the Church and to the world ; and yet almost every profession and pursuit in life is, in some way or other,

tacked on as a complement to the ministry of reconciliation. In view of all these things, is it any wonder that the ways of Zion mourn—that her King is displeased—that the Spirit is withheld—that the Vine withers and the Tares flourish? Is it not well that Christianity still lives, and infidelity does not reign universal and triumphant?

Dr. Chalmers once taught the sentiment that a man might spend five days in a week in some secular employment, and the other two in the duties of the ministry. But, after the experience of twenty years, he publicly confessed his error, and said, “So I thought in my ignorance and pride. I have now no reserve in saying that the sentiment is wrong—most outrageously wrong. I had forgotten *two magnitudes*. I thought not of the littleness of time. I recklessly thought not of the greatness of eternity!” May those who preach the everlasting Gospel never forget this noble confession of that great and candid man. May they never forget the *littleness* of time, and the *greatness* of eternity. May they never forget their responsibilities lest the blood of souls be required at their hands.

PRAYER IS A MEANS OF SALVATION. Knowing that the demands of law and justice are satisfied, and the blessings of grace are obtained and ratified by the blood of Jesus Christ, so that God can dispense his favors even to the guilty, we view him as our God and Father, and approach him, not as slaves and criminals,

but as children in whom the name of father awakens every pleasing emotion. These favors are obtained by prayer, through the infinite merits and mediation of our divine Redeemer. Prayer is the act of asking a favor — the act of communion with God in devotional address. It is the devout and earnest address of a penitent sinner to God for mercy, and when offered in faith, in the name of Christ, and by the aid of the Spirit, it never fails to obtain the desired blessing.

“ *Prayer* is the soul’s sincere desire,
Unuttered, or expressed ;
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the Christian’s vital breath,
The Christian’s native air ;
His watchword in the hour of death,
He enters heaven with prayer.

Prayer is the contrite sinner’s voice
Returning from his ways ;
While angels in their hymns rejoice,
And cry, ‘ Behold, he prays ! ’ ”

Since the heathen, everywhere, prayer and offered libations to their deities, prayer is a dictate of nature ; but revelation teaches and enforces this duty, when it requires us in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, to make known our requests to God. He is the only proper object of prayer ; and we approach the Father through the Son, and by the

aid of the Spirit, and thus honor all the persons of the Godhead. In coming to him, we come to an unfailing fountain, which is constantly sending forth an overflowing stream of blessings from age to age, and yet is always full. Jesus enforced this duty when he offered up prayer with strong crying and tears. It is the element in which the Christian lives, and moves, and has his being. Our dependence on God, our obligations for his numberless mercies, and our well-being in time and eternity, require us to come often, and with confidence, to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. When none but God is near, we have confessions, petitions and interests to transact between him and ourselves, which, for various reasons, cannot be disclosed to any creature, and which they have no right to know. God already knows them, and all our thoughts, words and actions, pains, sorrows and wants; and he alone can relieve our pains and supply our wants without prejudice, without partiality, and without grudging. He will not betray us, for he is faithful and true — our nearest and best friend — tender, and full of compassion, and ready to forgive, and show kindness and mercy to all who truly seek his favor. In prayer we come directly into his presence; and the consciousness that he knows our hearts and motives, tends to banish all improper thoughts, and fill our minds with solemnity and awe, and with a sense of our wants.

The conscience becomes more tender, sin more odious, and the value of the soul appears more important. Conscious that we cannot deceive God, nor deliver ourselves from the guilt, pollution and penalty of sin, we pray to him for deliverance. We feel that "sin is our ruin, and holiness our remedy;" and we cannot continue to sin, and continue to pray. One of the two must be relinquished. Even unregenerate men, when they attempt to pray, feel this, and are thus led to humble themselves before God, and look to him for holiness and salvation. Convinced of sin and danger, and that God alone can forgive and save, they prostrate themselves before him, and cry for mercy. In this situation he regards their prayer, and extends mercy to them. So the saint feels that God knows all his sins and wants, and that he alone can cleanse his soul, refine and exalt his views, remove his fears, quicken his affections, brighten his hopes, and give him everlasting joy.

In prayer we draw nigh to God, and obtain the best views of him, as a being of infinite perfections, bearing to us the endearing relation of God and Father. His image is more and more stamped on our hearts; and while we think of our sins and wants, and the source of all our blessings, his divine influence is more and more felt in our souls. It is the only mode of communication between God and man, and the divinely appointed way of obtaining blessings; and he who

rejects this way cuts himself off from all spiritual good ; violates every dictate of reason, and revelation, and conscience ; sins against God, and wrongs his own soul.

Who does not stand in need of fervent and importunate prayer, which is the source of so many and great blessings to individuals, families, churches, colleges and nations ! All have common interests, pains and pleasures, wants and enjoyments. All need the inestimable blessings of health, peace, pardon, holiness and eternal life. It makes all better in every respect ; more tender, honest, holy and useful, and more fit to receive divine favors. It promotes religion, and teaches that God is to be worshiped, honored and sought in all things. It is the great pillar of religion, without which all pretensions are vain ; and without which the Sabbath would be forgotten ; the Church deserted ; and the ways of Zion mourn. No influence is more felt in society, or in the world. By it all feel that God rules, and is a constant witness of their conduct, and rewards with the richest blessings those who truly seek his face ; but leaves destitute those who are too proud and indolent to ask his favors.

Blessings which none but God can give, are bestowed in answer to prayer : as joy in the Holy Ghost, hope that makes not ashamed, peace of conscience, pardon and eternal life ; but they are not given to those who do not pray. Prayer is the means which God has

appointed for obtaining these greatest of all blessings, and there is a more certain and inseparable connection between them and the means, than there is between the cultivation of the earth and her increase.

The infidel may cry, "What is the Almighty that we should serve him, and what profit should we have if we pray unto him?" Yet no objection can be brought against prayer as a means of receiving divine favors, which does not operate equally against the use of means in the natural world, for obtaining a desired end. The promise is "Ask and it shall be given you" — "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it to you." This promise is unlimited and absolute, and made by Him whose power and faithfulness will make it good to the prayer of faith. Oh, how sweet and encouraging are these words: "In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee;" when you call he will answer, and when you cry unto him he will say, "*here I am.*" How sweet to one mourning under the burden of sin, is it to know that "Whatsoever sins, or backslidings the children of God may have committed, his promise assures them of everlasting life. Whatever gross guilt or impious rebellion a Christian may have been the subject of, if they do not involve the sin against the Holy Ghost; still, if he exercises repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, he will be received in the end: every

humble, faithful prayer shall be certainly heard, accepted and answered."

He always hears the prayer of faith in the name of Christ, for things agreeable to his will, and in his own good time and way will answer it. He may delay for a time, to awaken our piety and activity—to prepare our minds for the answer—to make us live by faith on the promises—to pray more earnestly and importunately, and value and relish the blessings more when received. But he sometimes gives an immediate answer, as he did to Moses at the Red Sea—to Gideon for the dew; to Elijah for the rain; to Hezekiah for longer life; and to Daniel for the city of Jerusalem; yea, "It shall come to pass that before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear."

ISA. LXV: 24. While the apostles prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and while Cornelius prayed, the gracious answer was returned: "Thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God." AC. X: 31. So Jesus was always heard in prayer, but certainly he would have been heard without it, were it not the *appointed means* for obtaining the blessing. Every blessing from Heaven is sent in answer to prayer. The salvation of the Church, from the first gleam of hope which rises in the believer's breast to the rapturous song of the redeemed in glory, is in direct answer to the prayer of Christ for his people, "That they all may be one,

as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." Jno. xviii: 21.

Our design in prayer is not to inform God of our wants, but to awaken in ourselves a true sense of our feebleness, guilt and dependence, and indebtedness to him for every blessing we receive. It is to make us sensible of our need; of the importance of the blessings, and of the source from which they come. It is to fill our hearts with gratitude to God, and prepare us for the reception of blessings he is willing to bestow on them that ask, and deny to those who will not pray. O, for the spirit of prayer to be poured out abundantly on us, on the Church, and on the world, until from every dwelling, and from every heart, the incense of prayer and praise, perfumed with the intercession of Jesus Christ, shall ascend as sweet incense to the Most High! Then blessings without number and without end will descend on our souls, and on our fallen race; God will be glorified, the Son honored, and sinners saved.

“ Give me, O Lord, the spirit of prayer,
Thy grace, Thy mercy to implore;
Let not my willful spirit dare
To count secure her present store.
The richer falls Thy dew of grace,
The humbler let my head descend,
Till mercy’s sun in boundless space
Shall shed its bliss time without end.”

Let the enemies of the Lord stand in awe before the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man. The waves of the sea and of Jordan yield to its power—the plague stays its ravages—the sun stands still until Israel's foes are overthrown—the clouds of heaven are restrained, and the treasures of rain pour down blessings on the dry and parched ground. It alleviates the ills of the present life; sweetens our enjoyments; elevates the affections; lifts the soul up to God; inspires with hope, and obtains from the Fountain of all good the best blessings without number and without end.

“Arrested suns and tranquill’d seas declare
To heav’n and earth th’ omnipotence of prayer,
That gives the hopeless hope, the feeble might,
Outruns the swift, and puts the strong to flight,
The noontide arrow foils, and plague that stalks by night.
Then let those lips that never pray’d begin;
We must, or cease to pray, or cease to sin :
There is in that celestial treasury
Wealth inexhaustible, admission free;
But he who never prays, rejects the golden key.”

EARLY RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION AND DAILY INTERCOURSE WITH THE WISE AND VIRTUOUS ARE MEANS OF SALVATION. “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.” Pr. xxii: 6. In honor of Timothy, it is said, “and thou from a child hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith

which is in Christ Jesus.” How true is the declaration “It is not good that the soul be without knowledge.” Youth is the golden season of instruction, when the mind is free from care and anxiety, and is most susceptible of impressions — when the affections are tender, and the heart is easily won for good or for evil. This season neglected, the enemy will sow tares and pre-occupy the ground. They will take deep root, grow with vigor, and exclude the things which belong to our everlasting peace. The neglect of early religious instruction by parents and institutions of learning, is undoubtedly the cause of prevailing infidelity, profligacy and crime. Hence the great necessity of parents and guardians inculcating the religion of the Bible in the minds of the young entrusted to their care. Without it they cannot expect them to be found in the way of life and peace, in mature age. This duty is absolutely required of parents. “These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children; and thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house; and when thou walkest by the way; and when thou liest down; and when thou risest up; and thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand; and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes; and thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.” De. vi: 6-9.

How tender and beautiful are the words of the Saviour to his servants, "Feed my lambs," "Feed the kids beside the shepherds' tents." Children are the rising hope of Church and State — they are God's heritage. Then the interests of the young, and of society require this instruction — the endearing relation which they sustain to us, and the account we must at last render, require it. The salvation of the soul is here involved, and the history of every age and clime is a standing proof of the vast importance of this instruction. How important is the education of the young ! It involves their best interests in both worlds. If trained to virtue, they will reach Heaven. If trained to vice they will go down to Hell. How solemn is the thought of training an immortal mind for happiness, or for misery ! Yet alas, how many are trained in the nursery of vice, and not in the school of virtue — in the vanity of their minds, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ — in the way of sin and misery, and not in the way of life, holiness, peace and joy ! Without a miracle of grace, these young scions will go down to their dishonored graves, laden with the sins of their youth. How affecting, and yet how beautiful is the prayer of the king of Israel ! "Deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood ; that our sons may

be as plants grown up in their youth ; that our daughters may be as corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a palace." Ps. cxliv : 11, 12.

Our own daily intercourse with the wise and virtuous is of similar importance. The proverb is true : "He that walketh with the wise, shall be wise ; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed." The virtues which the wise exhibit in their lives, exert a most salutary influence on sinners. Their meekness, justice, mercy and truth, forbearance and forgiveness of injuries, often lead sinners to conclude, that there is something in religion more exalted and ennobling than they have ever experienced. The views they thus obtain of sin and holiness, virtue and vice, ruin and recovery, heaven and hell, frequently lead them to consider their own character, and turn to the Lord. While they behold the chaste conversation of the wise, coupled with fear, they see the beauty of holiness, and the deformity of vice ; the supreme excellence of religion, and the infinite value of the soul.

" Abashed the Devil stood
And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
Virtue in her shape, how lovely."

By this intercourse Christians become wiser and better. As face answers to face in water, so does the heart of man to man. The reproofs of instruction, received in kindness, are the way of life. All these

companions feel that they are members of the same family, redeemed by the same blood, and heirs of the same inheritance, having common faults and virtues, interests and pursuits, hopes and fears, joys and sorrows. Their peculiar views and feelings are interchanged, and become more just, enlarged and ennobled. That narrow, pre-judged, bigoted, censorious spirit, which is confined and cherished by exclusion from all who differ from ourselves, is rebuked; the heart is enlarged, its feelings exalted, and its designs dignified by religious intercourse. The greatest learn from the least, and the wisest from the most unwise. That charity which thinketh no evil, and is the bond of perfectness, is exercised; Christian sympathy is awakened and reciprocated in the prosperity and adversity, hopes and fears, joys and sorrows of the whole fraternity. Heart answers to heart. "The flame which glows in one breast is caught and kindled in another. The light which illumines one mind sheds its lustre over all the minds by which it is encircled. The soul, raised above itself by this happy communion, feels that it has passed from death unto life, because it loves the brethren. On such an assembly the Spirit of Grace fails not to shower his balmy influence, and to awaken, in the minds of which it is composed, delightful anticipations of future glory. Peace, and hope, and joy, descending from above, scatter here their richest blessings, and with a divine

enchantment raise up a transient but beautiful image of Heaven on this side of the grave.”—(*Dwight*.) Under the influence of religion, and intercourse with pious men, the minds of sinners are awakened to a sense of their guilt and danger, and they are urged to listen to the awful denunciations of the Law, and the gracious invitations of the Gospel; religious example is seen and felt; the infinite value of the soul is explained, and they become alarmed, and constrained to provide for its future welfare. The voice of joy and melody is heard in dwellings of the righteous—the Sabbath shines with peculiar lustre—the prayers and praises of the saints ascend in the sanctuary as sweet incense to the God of Heaven—the Spirit of Grace descends like rain on the mown grass, and multitudes are turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.

“ Thus on the heavenly hills,
The saints are bless’d above;
Where joy like morning dew distills,
And all the air is love.”

MEDITATION, SELF-EXAMINATION AND AFFLICTION ARE MEANS OF SALVATION. “Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.” But how can this be done without reflection on our conduct? All useful information is gained by the serious and solid exercise of the mind on its own operations, and on the principles of revealed truth. This influences the heart,

and moves us to act for God and our own souls. "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies." Ps. cxix: 59. Without this exercise, men will neglect their spiritual and eternal interests, and live even within the sound of the Gospel as if there were no God, no judgment to come, and no soul to be saved or lost. The language of their hearts is, "The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil;" and so they sleep on in sin without discharging the most important duty of life. "Know thyself," is an ancient proverb, which has not lost its charms by age, or repetition. Still, the great study of man is man. Without self-examination we cannot know ourselves. Hence the exhortation: "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" 2 Cor. xiii: 5. Examine yourselves as to your knowledge, your faith, repentance, love, and obedience to the divine will, and your prospects for eternity. By examination of ourselves and of the principles of religion, we learn our duty, and our true state before God. We discover our propensities, our obstinacy, our faith, and unbelief—the nature and extent of our sins—exposure to ruin, and deliverance from it; and by the sanctifying operation of the Holy Spirit on this discovery, we obtain eternal life.

Without meditation and self-examination, no man can tell whether he is "born of water and of the Spirit,"

or whether he is yet "dead in trespasses and sins." Nor can the Christian tell whether he is making any progress in holiness — gaining any power over his enemies — receiving any more affecting views of the divine character and of redeeming love — any more hatred of sin — any more peace of conscience, love of holiness, and true and lasting enjoyment. Without these exercises, the Spirit will not descend with his benign and saving influence on the soul; the sinner will not turn to God, and the saint will not make any progress in the divine life. Oh, what infatuation! Rather than examine themselves, and discover the enormity of sin and guilt in their hearts, and know the way of life and peace, men will run the awful hazard of eternal ruin! Since it is in the power of any man to discharge this duty, the omission of it is sinful. God has required it — our personal interests demand it; and until we have faithfully discharged this duty, we have not truly labored for our own salvation. How much better is it to know the worst in time, and apply the remedy, than know it when all remedy is forever gone!

By means of affliction some are turned to the Lord, and alas! when the rod is removed, some forget the vows they made when trouble lay on them. When earthly enjoyments fail men — when worldly pleasures lose their charms, and riches make wings and fly away

—when friends forsake and betray them, and the tongue of slander robs them of their good name; when they sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, bound in affliction and iron, and the king of terrors lays their dearest friends low in the dust; they turn their eyes to Him who alone can relieve their distresses, soothe their sorrows, supply their wants, multiply their joys, and save their souls. Thus, when Manasseh was bound with fetters, and carried to Babylon, in his “affliction he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his Fathers, and prayed unto him, and he was entreated of him, and heard his supplication.” 2 Ch. xxxiii: 11-13. So many are chosen in the furnace of affliction, and believers are recovered from their backslidings. They are chastened of the Lord, that they may not be condemned with the world. In their affliction they will seek me early, saith the Lord, and will cry, Look upon my affliction and my pain, and forgive all my sins. So Jonah cried by reason of his affliction; and the Psalmist said, Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now have I kept thy word. “Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.” Job xxxiii: 29, 30. Yes, “our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” 2 Co. iv: 17.

“ Fools, for their sin, and their offense,
Do sore affliction bear ;
All kinds of meat their soul abhors,
They to death’s gates draw near.

In grief they cry to God — he saves
Them from their miseries.
He sends his word, them heals, and them
From their destruction frees.”

BAPTISM AND THE LORD’S SUPPER ARE AUXILIARY MEANS OF SALVATION. The Word read and preached is the principal means, for by this alone, faith and holiness are produced in the soul ; but the ordinances assist in promoting, strengthening and confirming all the graces of the Spirit. They are divinely appointed means, and hence are of universal obligation. They are signs and seals of the “ promises of God, by which we are assured that the blessings promised, will be bestowed on all to whom the promise is made.” They represent Christ Jesus, and the immense benefits of his death to a lost world — the saving influence of the Spirit on the soul — our engagements to God, and they distinguish his people from the rest of the world. They are outward signs of invisible grace. Water is a symbol of the expiation of sin, by the blood of Jesus, and the renovation of the soul by the Holy Spirit. Baptism signifies the washing of regeneration — the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and the cleansing virtue of the blood of Christ, who gave himself for

the Church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The Lord's Supper is a holy ordinance of divine appointment, in which Jesus and the benefits of his death are represented, sealed and applied to believers.

Baptism is the initiating seal of discipleship, and must be administered in the name of the *Trinity*. Persons must first be baptized, and then admitted into the Church, as the three thousand converts were on the day of Pentecost. "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved ;" yet it is not the external "washing of the filth of the flesh" that saves us, but "the answer of a good conscience" towards God. Neither circumcision, nor uncircumcision, nor baptism avails anything ; but a *new creature* — regeneration by the Spirit, and faith in God. Grace and salvation are not inseparably connected with baptism ; yet because it is an ordinance of divine appointment, it is sinful to neglect it. The whole efficacy of this or any ordinance depends on the divine blessing.

The blessings signified by baptism are regeneration, pardon, admission into God's family, and resurrection to life eternal. It implies an engagement to believe all the truths of revelation ; to obey the commands, and observe the ordinances of God. It is calculated to produce the best effects on those who receive it,

to remind them of their dedication to the Lord — their vows and engagements to duty — their relation and their privileges as members of Christ's mystical body; "for by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." 1 Co. xii: 13.

" Ere Christ ascended to his throne,
He issued forth his great command:
Go preach the Gospel to the world,
And spread my name to ev'ry land.

To men declare their sinful state,
The methods of my grace explain;
He that believes, and is *baptized*,
Shall everlasting life obtain.

Dear Saviour, we thy will obey,
Not of constraint, but with delight;
Hither thy servants come to-day,
To honor thine appointed rite.

Descend again, Celestial Dove,
On these dear foll'wers of the Lord;
Exalted Head of all the Church,
Thy promis'd aid to them afford.

Let faith, assisted now by signs,
The mysteries of thy love explore;
And wash'd in thy redeeming blood,
Let them depart no more."

In that memorable night in which Jesus was betrayed with a kiss, he instituted the sacred Supper,

to be a memorial of his death ; a sign of his gracious presence with the Church, and a seal of the covenant of grace. It is a commemorative ordinance, to be observed until his second advent. It commemorates his peculiar and amazing death, and our eternal deliverance by it. It exhibits the enormous evil of sin, the infinite value of the soul, the unbounded love of Christ, and his signal triumph over all his and our enemies. The elements of bread and wine are *symbols* of his body, and blood shed for the remission of sin. The symbols of the Old Testament explain the nature of these elements. The Paschal lamb is called the Lord's Passover ; but the Passover was literally the act of the Lord passing over the houses of the Israelites when he destroyed Egypt's first-born. The lamb was only a sign and memorial of this act, or passover. So the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper are only a sign and memorial of Christ's body and blood. We eat his flesh and drink his blood only by faith. The elements are symbols of his body and blood ; and he is present in them, as he is in all his ordinances, by his Spirit, who makes them effectual means of salvation to every believer. In receiving them by faith, we receive Christ, and all the infinite benefits of his death. It is a memorial of his unbounded love, in giving himself for us, and is calculated to inflame our hearts with supreme love to Him who died that we might live. It is expressive of his extreme sufferings

on the cross, when he bowed his blessed head — cried, “It is finished,” and poured out his soul unto death for the remission of the sins of many. It commemorates the death of Him who laid down his life “a ransom for all.”

Before giving the elements to the disciples, he blessed, or gave God thanks for so loving the world as to send him to die for our fallen race. Giving the elements, intimates that he was given for our eternal salvation; and receiving them, implies our reception of him, our engagements to serve him, and our communion with him and with the brethren. 1 Co. x: 17. This is the badge of their fraternity, as members of the same family and table. Their character and privileges are the same — they are all equally dear to him, redeemed by the same precious blood, and heirs of the same incorruptible inheritance; and they have common interests, aims and ends, joys and sorrows. As no stranger might eat the Passover until circumcised, and as no ceremoniously unclean person might eat it, so no unbaptized person, nor any unregenerate man, may lawfully partake of the Lord’s Supper; nor even believers, when “their faith has declined; when their consciences are wounded by sin, and they are under divine displeasure, until they are renewed by repentance.”

Every one must have a reasonable hope that he is a believer. All must have a competent knowledge of

Jesus Christ — must have faith, repentance, and love to Jesus and the brethren — love in deed and in truth — love vigorous and expansive, superior to bigotry, prejudice and party — love that will make them feel a common interest in each other, in the cause of God, and their own souls ; and will make them count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ their Lord.

This ordinance is designed to strengthen and comfort us with divine consolation — to establish us in the truth, in purity, in doctrine and in practice. It is designed to exhibit the awful displays of divine justice, and displeasure at sin, and to represent Christ Jesus as the great atoning sacrifice for sin. Christ our Passover is here sacrificed for us. Here he says : “This is my body broken for you” — “This cup is the New Testament in my blood.” Here sin appears in its darkest colors, and divine justice in its clearest light : for certainly, “If there had been a law given, which could have given life, verily, righteousness should have been by the Law ;” and “if righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain.” Ga. iii : 21 ; ii : 21. Certainly, if atonement could have been made, and divine justice satisfied at a less expense, this cup would have passed from Christ. But no ; it behooved him to suffer, and so he drank its bitter dregs ; satisfied justice, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness.

Here we see with wonder and amazement his glorious character — his divine original — his incarnation, life and death ; love, sacrifice, resurrection, exaltation and intercession. We see Him who is the brightness of the Father's glory ; by whom all things were created, and by whom all things consist — who is the Head over all things to the Church — our glorious Redeemer, and the supreme Judge of men and of fallen angels, giving his life “a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” Here our hearts are filled with love and gratitude to him, and we unite with the triumphant hosts on high in saying : “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing ;” for he hath “loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, even his Father. To him be glory and dominion, forever and ever, Amen.” At this holy ordinance he satisfies our souls even as with marrow and fatness, until he brings us within the gates of the New Jerusalem, where he will give us to eat of the Tree of Life in the midst of the Paradise of God, and to drink of the pure river of Water of Life, clear as crystal, proceeding out from his Eternal Throne. Then, in obedience to his command, “This do in remembrance of me,” will we not observe this ordinance as a means of salvation, and as a standing memorial of the great love wherewith he has loved us, and given

himself for us? He is our nearest and best friend — our greatest benefactor — our lawgiver, and our king who will save us, and who will finally bring us in triumph into mansions of eternal bliss. Will we not pay this small tribute of respect to his memory, after the numberless and infinite blessings he has procured for us, and represented in the ordinance of his Supper? Here is the royal, nuptial banquet — the sumptuous, soul-satisfying feast, which he has “prepared unto all people; a feast of fat things; a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.” Here the King spreads his table with the dainties of heaven — with the hidden manna — the bread and water of life; and his cup overflows with divine goodness. He sits at his table, and bestows on his guests the blessings of his grace. Here, millions of glorified saints have feasted to life everlasting. Here —

“ The King of heaven his table spreads,
And dainties crown the board:
Not Paradise with all its joys,
Could such delight afford.

Pardon and peace to dying men,
And endless life are given,
And the rich blood that Jesus shed,
To raise the soul to Heaven.

Millions of souls, in glory now,
Were fed and feasted here:
And millions more, still on the way,
Around the board appear.

Come, let us join our cheerful songs,
With angels round the throne,
Ten thousand thousand are their tongues,
But all their joys are one.

Worthy the Lamb that died, they cry,
To be exalted thus :
Worthy the Lamb, our lips reply,
For he was slain for us."

Has God in mercy favored us with the means of salvation, while others are left to the dim light of nature? Then we are brought under corresponding obligations to love and serve him ; for to whom much is given, of them also will much be required. Eternity alone can tell the value of these means. But are we improving them to the glory of God and the welfare of our souls? Are we led by them to the Saviour who died for our redemption, and now pleads our cause before the throne of God? Or do we remain unmoved, and impenitent and unconcerned? Oh, remember it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for those who neglect and abuse their Gospel privileges. The preaching of the Gospel is the savor of life unto life, or of death unto death, and God will honor his own means in the terrible displays of justice on his enemies, or in the exercise of mercy on them that fear and honor his name. "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Oh, let us with all diligence and perseverance improve these

means and look with confidence beyond them to the Author for his blessing, without which they will be unmeaning ceremonies, and will finally add fuel to the flames of that fire which never shall be quenched. Let the word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom, as the rule of our lives, and as a source of comfort in all our tribulations, and let our prayers ascend without ceasing unto God for the blessings of his providence and his grace. Let us bear on our spirits, at the throne of grace, those who have no knowledge of the Saviour and no ray of hope beyond the grave. Let the watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, never hold their peace day nor night, until God establish, and till he make thee a praise in the earth, an eternal excellency, and make us joyful in his house of prayer; until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth, and the Gentiles shall see his righteousness and all kings his glory. Alas! what will become of those who have the means of salvation, but neglect and despise them, and do despite to the Spirit of grace? How dreadful beyond conception will be their final doom! Oh, that they would consider this, lest God tear them in pieces, and there be none to deliver! Oh, that they may know in their day the things which belong to their peace, before they are hid from their eyes! While they act the part of wisdom in temporal things, may they act the same part

in spiritual and eternal things. While they are wise for time, may they be wise for eternity ; and may he

“ Who never had a dozen thoughts
In all his life, and never changed their course ;
But told them o’er each in its ’customed place,
From morn till night, from youth till hoary age,”

know the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make him wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

X.

THE TIME OF SALVATION.

“ There is a time we know not when,
A point, we know not where,
That marks the destiny of men
To glory or despair.

There is a line, by us unseen,
That crosses every path;
The hidden boundary between
God’s patience and his wrath.

How far may we go on in sin?
How long will God forbear?
Where does hope end, and where begin
The confines of despair?

An answer from the skies is sent:
Ye that from God depart,
While it is called *to-day* repent,
And harden not your heart.”

TIME is a part, or the measure of duration. It is measured by the revolution of the heavenly bodies, and by artificial means. Our time of appearance in the world, continuance in it, and departure out of it, is fixed and known only by Him who sees the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done. “Is there not an appointed time to

man upon earth? seeing his days are determined, the number of his months is with Thee. Thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass." Is there not also a time given man in this busy world, to prepare for the world to come? By their words and actions, many declare God has given them no such time. But is it true that He whose name is Love, and whose benevolence is so conspicuous in all his works and ways, has not given his accountable creatures time to prepare for eternity. Does his unbounded goodness appear in giving us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, and in supplying with a bountiful hand the wants of everything that lives, and yet has He given man no time to secure the interests of his soul? Or does not the supposed want of time arise from the want of economizing and improving it, and from indisposition to serve the Lord? Do not men trifle and sin away much time, regardless of God and eternity?—Ah, the fault is their own. Jesus says, "ye will not come to me that ye might have life." You have no inclination—but you have time; for "to everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven; a time to be born, and a time to die;" a time to obtain salvation. True, this time is short—much of it is already past—the future is uncertain—the present only is ours, and it *belongs* to God, to *religion* and to *mankind*. Behold, *now* is the accepted time—behold, *now* is the day of salvation. *Now*, in the time

of youth and health ; of spiritual conviction ; of revival ; of Gospel and sacramental privileges.

TIME IS RAPID IN ITS FLIGHT. Time, irrevocable time, incessantly flies away both day and night. As the rapid stream winding among hills and valleys, constantly hurries on to the vast ocean, so time hurries on to eternity. It waits for none, great or small. None can by any means hinder its rapid flight, more than they can stay the sun in his course. Moments, hours, days, and years, steal silently away on their swift wings. Wherever we are, whatever we do, time pursues his incessant and unwearied course. Whether we are idle or employed, it still runs its swift race, and whirls our days and years away in rapid succession. It is swift as the wings of the morning ; as the wings of the wind — swifter than the flying shuttle. It soon weaves the warp of life — swifter than the hurried post, the flying eagle, and the flying shadow. Such bold and beautiful similes are used by the inspired penman, to show the rapid flight of time. “My days,” says Job, “are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle, and are spent without hope” — “O, remember that my life is wind” — “My days are swifter than a post ; they flee away ; they see no good ; they are passed away as the swift ships ; as the eagle that hasteth to the prey” — “Man cometh forth like a flower and is cut down ; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.” “Our days on the earth are as

a shadow, and there is none abiding." 1 Ch. xxix: 15. O, what true and touching similes of the rapidity of time! swift as the eagle, the wind, the shadow, the tide, the tempest; as the "darted flame to gain his goal, to reach his ancient rest, and join anew eternity, his sire." "Man flies from time, and time from man; too soon in sad divorce this double flight must end, and where are we!" O, why do any think time moves slowly? Why do they esteem time a burden and devise means to spend and kill it? Why spur the speedy; hasten the swift; kill the dying and flee from the departing? Have you lived long enough in this sinful and unsatisfying world? Is your salvation secured, and are you longing for the time of your departure, when you will receive a crown of righteousness; or is the great business of life yet undone while time is hasting away, and eternity is at the door? Alas!

"*Time* speeds away — away — away:

Another hour — another day —

Another month — another year —

Drop from us like the leaflets sear;

Drop like the life-blood from our hearts;

The rose-bloom from the cheek departs,

The tresses from the temples fall,

The eye grows dim, and strange to all.

Time speeds away — away — away,

Like torrent in a stormy day;

He undermines the stately tower,

Uproots the tree and snaps the flower;

And sweeps from our distracted breast
The friends that loved — the friends that blest ;
And leaves us weeping on the shore
To which they can return no more.

Time speeds away — away — away :
No eagle through the skies of day,
No wind along the hills can flee
So swiftly or so smooth as he.
Like fiery steed, from stage to stage,
He bears us on from youth to age ;
Then plunges in the fearful sea
Of fathomless eternity.”

TIME IS SHORT IN DURATION. Once human life extended to nearly a thousand years ; but it was soon reduced to threescore and ten, or fourscore years. It now seldom reaches that period. Thirty years is about the average age of man. Many die in youth ; many in infancy, and many in the dawn of life. In comparison with eternity, and with Him who is from everlasting to everlasting, our age is as nothing — a thousand years are as nothing. “Lord, thou turnest man to destruction ; and sayest, return, ye children of men : for a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. Thou carriest them away as with a flood ; they are as a sleep : in the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth and groweth up ; in the evening it is cut down and withereth : for all our days are passed away in thy wrath ; we

spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away." Ps. xc.

" Our days, alas, our mortal days
Are short and wretched too;
Evil and few, the patriarch says,
And well the patriarch knew.

Let heavenly love prepare my soul,
And call her to the skies,
Where years of long salvation roll,
And glory never dies."

The king of Israel, amidst the splendors of an earthly crown, uttered this melancholy truth: "There is but a step between me and death" — "Behold, thou hast made my days as an hand-breadth, and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily, every man at his best state is altogether vanity." Under a deep sense of the brevity of life, Job exclaimed: "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble; he cometh forth like a flower, and continueth not" — "When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return." Job, xvi: 22. In the sublime strains of Isaiah: "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is

grass." *Is. xl: 6, 7.* How impressive is the language of the Apostle: "The time is short. It remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none, and they that weep as though they wept not; and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy as though they possessed not; and they that use this world as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away." *1 Co. vii: 29.* "Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me." *2 Pe. i: 14.* "What is your life? It is even as a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." We all do fade as a leaf—as a flower. Already the shadows of the evening are stretched out, and eternity is at hand.

To the young, time may seem long—even a year, or a day. But when it is past, how short does even a life-time appear! Ask the man of years, standing on the brink of the grave: How many have been the days of the years of his life? and then "observe how he shakes his hoary locks, and from a deep-felt conviction replies, 'Fourscore years have finished their rounds to furrow these cheeks and clothe this head in snow.' Such a term may seem long, and large, to inconsiderate youth. But O! how short, how scanty, to one that has made the experiment! Short as a gleam of transient sunshine; scanty as the shadow that departeth! Methinks it was but yesterday that

I exchanged my childish sports for manly exercises, and now I am resigning them both for the sleep of death. As soon as we are born, we begin to draw to our end ; and how small is the interval between the cradle and the tomb ! O, may we believe this testimony of mature age ! May every evening bring it with clearer evidence to our minds ! And may we form such an estimate of the little pittance, while it is upon the advancing hand, as we shall certainly make when the sands are all run down !”

“ Haste, haste ! he lies in wait, he’s at the door,
Insidious death ! Should his strong hand arrest,
No composition sets the pris’ner free.”

TIME IS EXTREMELY UNCERTAIN. Every day’s occurrence evinces this solemn truth. Every day’s report of wrong and outrage brings the melancholy tidings of the fatal dagger and revolver. Even without the history of those miraculous events, when the world was destroyed by water ; Sodom and Gomorrah by fire ; Egypt, Korah and his company, Sennacherib and his army, by the Angel of Death, who

“ Breathed in the face of the foe as he passed,”

we have abundant evidence of the extreme uncertainty of life. While some are eating and drinking in their eldest brother’s house, a great wind from the wilderness may lay it in ruins, and the young men are

dead ! The whirl or collision of cars — the explosion or sinking of a vessel, hurries many into eternity. Pursuing their lawful business, at home or abroad, men are suddenly called to their long home. One lies down at night in usual health, and never awakes till the resurrection morn. “One dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease, and quiet. His breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moistened with marrow. And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure.” Job xxi: 23-25. A frightened steed hurries another headlong into the unseen and untried world. A thunderbolt darts from the cloud, and sends a third unprepared into eternity. In any calling, at any age, or station, the slender thread of life may be snapt in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. At cards, or balls, or scenes of pleasure, or sin — on the throne — at the altar, the pulse may beat no more. O, how uncertain is life !

“ Ah ! in what perils is vain life engaged !

What slight neglects, what trivial faults, destroy

The hardiest frame ! Of indolence, of toil,

We die, of want, of superfluity,

The all-surrounding heav’n, the vital air,

Is big with death.”

None but the omniscient God can foresee the future, and tell what will take place the next hour ; the next moment. O, build not your mountain hopes on the uncertain future ; for the pleasing hopes of a kind

father and fond mother are often suddenly destroyed by that strong arm which overturns the mountains by their roots. When least expected, the most cheering prospects of youth are often destroyed by the Angel of Death. Perhaps the nuptial joys are to be celebrated when, by a dreadful vicissitude, "the bridal festival is turned into the funeral solemnity." The bride had made herself ready, and inquired why his chariot was so long in coming, when a herald proclaimed these heavy tidings, "Go, disappointed virgin ! Go, mourn the uncertainty of all created bliss ! Teach thy soul to aspire after a sure and immutable felicity ; for the once gay and gallant Fidelio sleeps in other embraces ; even in the icy arms of death ! forgetful, eternally forgetful of the world and thee !" O, listen to the Saviour's admonition, "Take ye heed, watch and pray, for ye know not when the time is." "The Son of Man cometh as a thief in the night"—as the lightening which appears in the east, and shines even unto the west. "For man also knoweth not his time ; as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare ; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them." *Ecc. ix : 12.*

We stand on the verge of eternity ! "In the midst of life we are in death." No age, or office, or condition in life, can ensure our continuance a single moment. The messenger of death is unerring, irresistible, insati-

able, and often sudden as the lightning in his approach. None can promise themselves safety ; nor any tell who will be the next victim. Then “ Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh.” “ Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.” *To-morrow !* in what far country does it lie ?

“ To-morrow !

It is a period nowhere to be found

In all the hoary registers of Time,

Unless, perchance, in the fool’s calendar.”

“ In human hearts what bolder thought can rise

Than man’s presumption on *to-morrow’s* dawn.

Where is *to-morrow* ? In another world.

And yet on this perhaps, this peradventure

(Infamous for lies), as on a rock of adamant,

We build our mountain hopes, spin our eternal schemes,

And big with life’s futurities expire.”

TIME IS OF IMMENSE VALUE. During our momentary existence on earth, a work of no small difficulty, and of the utmost importance, must be accomplished — our eternal salvation must be obtained now or never. On what a moment of time hang everlasting things ! Then how shall we estimate the value of time ? Can it be estimated by figures ? Can it be valued with gold ? What is said of wisdom is true of time : “ Man knoweth not the price thereof ; neither is it found in the land of the living. The depth saith, it is not in

me; and the sea saith, it is not with me. It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof. It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire. The gold and the crystal cannot equal it; and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold. No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls; for the price of wisdom" — *the price of time* — "is above rubies. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold." Job xxviii: 13-19. How immense its value! But much of our precious time is past, and the future is uncertain. The remainder is, therefore, greatly enhanced in value. Imagine yourself at the point of death, and the great work of salvation yet undone, or even commenced, and what estimate will you make of the value of time? Then, perhaps, you will cry in vain, as some other unhappy beings have cried. On her death-bed, Elizabeth, the unhappy Queen of England, who had spent her life without preparing for eternity, exclaimed in agony: "Millions of worlds! millions of worlds for another day of probation!" Young Altamount cried out, in his last moments: "O time, time! it is fit that thou shouldst strike thy murderer to the heart! How art thou fled forever! A month! O, for a single week! I ask not for years, though an age were too little for the much I have to do. Remorse for the past throws my thoughts on the future. Worse dread of the

future strikes them back on the past. I turn, and turn, and find no ray. Is there another hell? O, thou blasphemed, yet indulgent Lord God! hell itself will be a refuge, if it hides me from thy frown!" The honorable Sir Francis Newport, when near his last, looked at the fire, and said: "O that I might lie upon that fire for a hundred thousand years, to purchase the favor of God! But it is a fruitless wish. Millions of millions of years will bring me no nearer the end of my troubles than one poor hour. O eternity, eternity! who can discover the abyss of eternity! O that I were in hell, that I might feel the worst; and yet I dread to die, because that worst will never have an end. When will be the last breath, the last pulse that shall beat my spirit out of this decayed mansion into the desired region of death and hell! O, it is at hand; but I am afraid, again, to die. Ah! the forlorn state of one that has no God to fly to for peace and comfort! O, the insufferable pangs of hell and damnation!" Poor man! honored in the world, but in death and eternity perfectly miserable, because he had not improved the day of salvation. O, how little do many think of the value of time! While in health — in affluence — in the Chair of State — they trifle, and sleep, and sin away precious time! While unprepared for eternity, is there nothing for them to do for themselves? or is there no object of charity — no lonely widow — no helpless orphan — no perishing sinner,

to whom they can administer some seasonable aid — some reviving cordial — some word of comfort? O, why would any one be so prodigal of what is so precious — why shorten what is so short — why hasten what is ever on the wing!

“ Throw years away!

Throw empires, and be blameless. Moments seize
Heav’n’s on their wing: a moment we may wish,
When worlds want wealth to buy.

O *Time!* than gold more sacred; more a load

Than lead to fools, and fools reputed wise.

What moment granted man without account?

What years are squandered, wisdom’s debt unpaid!

Our wealth in days all due to that discharge.”

TIME IS ALWAYS MAKING A FINAL DEPARTURE. When past it never returns. None can stay its rapid flight, and all the universe cannot bring back one departed moment. None ever saw its birth; but all shall behold its death. So loud will the commissioned angel proclaim, “Time shall be no longer,” that all the world shall hear, and come to the funeral solemnity. Then abused privileges will never return — no offers of mercy will be made — Jesus who has stood knocking at your heart for days and months, perhaps years, will knock no more. Thousands of worlds cannot procure for you another moment to prepare for eternity. Alas! Time, “the fatal wreck of mortal things” is always breathing a soft farewell amidst the sum of human bliss or human woe. It has taken its

last and long farewell of millions in every age and clime, and soon it will take its last adieu of us. Where are our fathers — where are the prophets — where are the generations, before and after the flood? Ah, they and time have parted forever. They have spent their transient day, and gone from this mortal scene. Their days are numbered with the years of eternity! Where are many of our youthful companions? Alas, they too are gone, leaving us on the confines of another world, and another step may bring us within its vast boundary! Let us ask in the affecting words of Dr. Chalmers. “Where are the men, who a few years ago gave motion and activity to this busy theatre? Where those husbandmen who lived on the ground that you now occupy? Where those laboring poor who dwelt in your houses and villages? Where those ministers who preached the lessons of piety, and talked of the vanity of this world? Where those people who, on the Sabbaths of other times, assembled at the sound of the church-bell, and filled the house in which you are now sitting? Their habitation is the cold grave, the land of forgetfulness * * * * and we are the children of these fathers, and heirs to the same awful and stupendous destiny. Ours is one of the many generations, who pass in rapid succession through this region of life and of sensibility. The time in which I live is but a small moment of this world’s history. When we rise in contemplation to

the roll of ages that are past, the momentary being of an individual shrinks into nothing. It is the flight of a shadow — it is a dream of vanity — it is the rapid glance of a meteor — it is a flower which every breath of heaven can wither into decay — it is a tale which as a remembrance vanishes — it is a day which the silence of a long night will darken and overshadow. In a few years our heads will be laid in the cold grave, and the green turf will cover us. The children who come after us will tread upon our graves; they will weep for us a few days; they will talk of us a few months; they will remember us a few years, when our memory shall disappear from the face of the earth, and not a tongue shall be found to recall it. * * * *
How perishable is human life, yet no man lays it to heart!" O, how serious and mournful are these thoughts! How brief is our existence on earth! How soon is it forgotten! How solemn is the departure of time!

“ Be silent and still, for his end draweth near,

And watch with a quivering breath;

No mortal eye beheld his birth,

But all shall behold his death :

For the nations from every land and clime

Shall gather to gaze on the close of *time*.

The moon shall look down with a tearful eye,

And the sun shall withhold his fire;

And the hoary earth, all parched and dry,

Shall flame for his funeral pyre,

When the Angel, that standeth on earth and shore,
Proclaimeth that "Time shall be no more!"

Behold that mighty Angel with the clouds for his chariot—the bow of the covenant covers him with a glorious diadem—the light of the sun beams in his countenance, and a flame of fire burns beneath his feet. He stands one foot on sea, and one on solid land—his hand is lifted up to the glittering stars—the regions of the skies echo with the sound of his voice, which louder than peals of thunder sounds the alarm, and prepares the universe to receive his divine orders. He speaks with terrible majesty, and with the utmost solemnity swears by Him that lives forever and ever. With uplifted hand he pronounces the terrible decree, yet in whatever manner a person so august would speak, he could not fail to command universal and profound attention. "But when he confirms his speech by a most sacred and inviolable oath, we are not only wrapt in silent suspense, but overwhelmed with the profoundest awe. He swears, that *Time shall be no longer*. Was ever voice so full of terror; so big with wonder! It proclaims not the fall of empires, but the final period of things. It strikes off the wheels of nature; bids ages and generations cease to roll; and, with one potent word, consigns a whole world over to dissolution." O, what is time? How long will it continue? When will it finally depart?

“ I ask’d an aged man, a man of cares,
Wrinkled, and curved, and white with hoary hairs ;
Time is the warp of life, he said ; Oh, tell
The young, the fair, the gay, to weave it well !
I ask’d the ancient, venerable dead,
Sages who wrote, and warriors who bled ;
From the cold grave a hollow murmur flow’d,
Time sow’d the seed, we reap in this abode !
I ask’d a dying sinner, ere the tide
Of life had left his veins. *Time*, he replied ;
I’ve lost it ! ah, the treasure ! and he died.
I ask’d the golden sun and silver spheres,
Those bright chronometers of days and years ;
They answered, *Time* is but a meteor glare,
And bade us for Eternity prepare.
I ask’d the seasons, in their annual round,
Which beautify, or desolate the ground ;
And they replied (no oracle more wise),
’Tis folly’s blank, and wisdom’s highest prize !
I ask’d a spirit lost ; but Oh, the shriek
That pierced my soul ! I shudder while I speak !
It cried, A particle ! a speck ! a mite
Of endless years, duration infinite !
Of things inanimate, my dial I
Consulted, and it made me this reply :
Time is the season fair of living well,
The path of glory, or the path of hell !
I ask’d my Bible, and methinks it said,
Time is the present hour, the past is fled ;
Live ! live to-day ! to-morrow never yet
On any living being rose or set !
I ask’d old Father *Time* himself, at last ;
But in a moment he flew swiftly past :
His chariot was a cloud, the viewless wind

His noiseless steeds, which left no trace behind.
I ask'd a mighty angel, who shall stand
One foot on sea, and one on solid land;
By Heaven, he cried, I swear the mystery's o'er;
Time was, he cried, but *Time* shall be no more!"

Hence, THE PRESENT IMPORTANCE OF TIME. Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation. 2 Cor. vi: 2. *Now* the golden sceptre is held out for you to touch it, and live forever. *Now* life and death, the blessing and the curse, are set before you. *Now* the terrible threatenings of the Law, and the sweet promises of the Gospel, warn and invite you to shun the abodes of everlasting woe, and obtain the ineffable and eternal joys of Heaven. *Now* the holy Sabbath and the ordinances of grace are instituted for your spiritual and eternal welfare, and the ministry of reconciliation is appointed, to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to warn and exhort every man. In the Garden and on the Cross, Jesus has given the clearest demonstration of his unbounded love for your souls. In fulfillment of his promise, he sends the Holy Spirit to operate on your hearts by his renewing, sanctifying and saving influences. In the most earnest and impressive manner, God calls you by his Word, and Spirit, and servants — by pining sickness, sudden death, and public calamities. He calls you by the vanity of the world, and by the painful convictions of a guilty conscience, anticipating the terrors of the

last great day, to secure salvation *now*, in the time of his merciful visitation. *To-morrow may be too late.* Then the messengers of peace may be recalled — the offers of mercy withdrawn — the theatre of human life closed, and the entire drapery wound up. Another opportunity may never occur, and so you are left to die in your sins. Had blind Bartimeus neglected the time of the Saviour's first and last visit to Jericho, he would have remained blind forever. The young man mentioned in the Gospel, who was not far from the kingdom of Heaven, never again met with Christ, nor inquired for salvation. Felix never found his convenient season to send for the Apostle. Agrippa was never fully persuaded to be a Christian. Then think, that perhaps Jesus is now passing by for the last time, and it is the turning-point of your eternal destiny ! Alas ! many, who for the last time hear the Gospel, are almost persuaded to be Christians ; yet say, "Go thy way for this time," and thus die as they lived, in sin. Beware lest that come upon you : "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish ; for I work a work in your days, a work which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you."

How dreary, dark and desolate is the condition of those who are yet living without God, and without hope in the world ! Day after day is hasting on to eternity, and they are altogether unprepared for the world

to come. No dews of Heaven distill, and no ray of the Sun of Righteousness shines on their benighted souls — no God gives them the light of his life-giving countenance — no Saviour greets them with his cheering smiles — no Holy Spirit takes up his abode in their hard and wretched hearts ; but the awful curse of the broken law hangs on them. The Angel of Death stands with drawn sword, ready to cut them down, and cast them into outer darkness, and nothing less than divine mercy and forbearance keeps them from hell one moment ! Oh, see the ravages of time in the face of nature, in kingdoms, churches, families and individuals, and improve it for eternity. This may be the last call of mercy — the last time, and if slighted, it will never return. It is gone forever — the lamp of life is burnt out, and in the end you will begin to say, O, that I had spent my time in prayer and in preparation for the world to come, and not in the cares and pleasures of this vain life ! O, that I had improved the means and the day of salvation ! But now they are gone — now the lamp of life is going out and the last ray will soon be extinguished. The last proffer of mercy is made — the time of hearing the Gospel is over and gone. O, that I had another day, another hour to prepare for eternity ! O, that I had been wise — that I had known in this my day the things which belong to my peace ; but now

they are hid from mine eyes. Alas ! "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved !"

Jer. viii : 20.

We beseech you to work while it is called *to-day*, or you will be miserably and eternally poor beyond all conception. The soul of the sluggard desireth and hath nothing ; he shall beg in harvest and have nothing ; but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat. Be not weary in well doing, for in due time you shall reap if you faint not. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling—strive to enter in at the strait gate ; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. They seek, but they do not strive to enter in, and so fail. Then lose no time and let nothing hinder you from working while it is day. Remember *one thing is needful*, and if not now secured, it is lost forever ! Let others do what they will, and serve whom they will ; let them spend their precious time in the cares, and follies, and vain glory of this world ; but remember there is another world, and great exertion is necessary to shun its endless woe, and obtain its everlasting bliss.

If you let the precious time of salvation pass unimproved, you will, when too late, lament your consummate folly. You have only one life in which to gain or lose Heaven ; and the thought of spending that life in vanity and sin, will finally and forever fill you with extreme sorrow. Now Jesus, and his salvation with

all its attending honor and glory, are freely and fully offered you ; but when you will have passed the boundary of time, no more offers of mercy will be made. O, rejoice that Heaven is yet before you — that the arms of mercy are still extended for your reception — that the Saviour still knocks at your heart, the Spirit strives, and God waits to be gracious. He cries, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” Look, and live. Let not this precious season pass, and leave you still more hardened in sin, while standing on the verge of eternity without the noble prize of salvation. It must be obtained *now*, or *never*. Look to your souls — to God — to eternity. Look at the warnings given in his word and providence — at the joys or sorrows that await you in the unseen and untried world. Look at what Christ has done for your redemption, and think of the extreme misery of those who now say, and will forever say, *It is too late !* *Now* is the day of your salvation. No better time will ever come. Let it not pass without securing eternal life. Let us not lament over your endless ruin. At the close of life there is no more time to recover from a state of sin and misery, and be renewed after the Divine image.

Let us seriously ask ourselves, if this great and all-important change is wrought in our souls. Are our desires and joys fixed on God and Heaven — do our souls follow hard after God — do we esteem his favor

life, and his loving kindness better than life? Now he calls *to-day*; if ye will hear my voice harden not your heart. Now the fountain of Christ's blood is open to wash away our sins, and it stands open in the preaching of the everlasting Gospel, while God is in Christ Jesus reconciling sinners to himself. Now you hear his voice of mercy; but remember, that voice does not reach the abodes of the dead, nor the regions of woe. Life is the time to serve the Lord — the only time to pray, and work out your own salvation. There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave. Then have you ever begun in earnest to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling? How serious and important is this question! for no promises of mercy will be made in the world to come — no opportunity to secure everlasting bliss — no prayers will be heard — no repentance can be exercised, when this life is done. Then, the sinner is given up to blindness of mind, and hardness of heart, and final impenitence — then, he will find no place for repentance, though he seek it carefully with tears — then, *peace bleeds, and hope expires*. There is hope in this life for the most vile and wretched; but *then*, there is only despair. Now the Gospel calls the vilest sinner to turn and live — now the Saviour knocks at our hearts for admission, and offers the riches of his kingdom to all who will open to him — now he calls us to believe, and repent, and hear, that our souls may

live—now is the only time to prepare for the life to come—to secure the great reward, and be ready to stand acquitted before the supreme Judge of all in the last great day.

Have you ever begun to make this preparation? Have you fled to Christ, and laid hold on eternal life, whereunto also you are called? Remember, time is swiftly passing, and death hourly approaching. The season to prepare for the awful summons—for the tremendous judgment, and for vast eternity, will soon be entirely gone forever, and how dreadful beyond conception will be the case of those who have neglected so great salvation! They must die without hope, and lie down forever in the dark region of despair!

If you are satisfied to live without God, and without hope in the world, until the close of life, your pleasures and comforts will then be no more. There will be nothing to please the eye, gratify the taste, or sustain your disconsolate hearts. All the cares, and labors, and joys of life will be past—all the antidotes for the cares and sorrows of life will be gone, and you must enter the world of spirits *alone*, without a friend, without support, and without any comfort. There will be nothing to allay your extreme anguish and inconceivable torment—no scenes of gayety and merriment to relieve the gloom of *outer darkness*—no drop of water to cool your tongue—no friend to soothe your sor-

rows — no Saviour to whisper *peace* to your souls. How terrible is the thought of this misery! How much more terrible, to endure it without end! The pleasures and enjoyments of this life cannot follow you to another world, and the time of preparing for it is short and uncertain. Therefore, you must prepare for it *now*, or *never*. The end of all things is at hand.

“ *Now* is the accepted time,
Now is the day of grace;
O sinner, come without delay,
And seek the Saviour’s face.

Now is the accepted time,
The Saviour calls *to-day*;
To-morrow, it may be *too late*;
Then why should you delay?

Now is the accepted time,
The Gospel bids you come,
And every promise in His Word,
Declares there yet is room.

Lord! draw reluctant souls,
And melt them by thy love;
Then will the angels speed their way,
To hear the news above.”

The value of the present time to prepare for eternity is inconceivably great. The terrors or comforts of a dying hour; the joys or sorrows of eternity, so far as human agency is concerned, are suspended on the present moment. Then improve it to the best advan-

tage. Learn from the setting sun and the pale moon — the flowing stream and the swift wind, how time is passing on to an end. Silent, but swift and irresistible is its onward march. The revolution of years, months, days and hours, is filling up the measure of our brief existence on earth; and are we prepared to leave the world? Our companions and friends are falling on every side, and their *graves* tell us, that, *the cold clod and the green turf will soon cover our heads.*

Think of the folly of those who, unprepared to die, still neglect the means of salvation, spend their precious time in trifles, and live as if they had nothing to do, but devise means to kill that time which hangs so heavily on them, although it incessantly flies like the wind, or the darted flame to reach its ancient rest. Their judgment lingers not, and the moment is fast hasting on, when they would give worlds of wealth for a day, or an hour, to prepare to meet their God. Perhaps you intend, at some future period, to seek salvation? So did those who are now in the abodes of endless woe; but like them you still defer it. In youth you defer it until mature age; in sickness until you recover; under convictions until a convenient season; in business until you retire in affluence; in the pursuit of literature, until you have ascended the hill of science; in obscurity until you have plucked the laurels of honor and fame. But defer no longer —

seek it *now*: for good impressions may be lost — good intentions may be deferred too long — convictions may never return — the convenient season may never come — the Spirit may cease to strive, and *to-morrow* may never dawn. “Acquaint *now* thyself with God, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee.” Honor him and he will honor you. The work of salvation is of great difficulty and infinite importance. A whole life-time is not too long for it, and the present only is ours. Habits of sin strengthen by delay, and make the work more difficult and uncertain. The voice of nature, and reason, and revelation, and conscience, all declare, *now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation. Do you now hear that voice, or have you already repented, and received the blessed Saviour in the arms of faith and love?

To-day, not *to-morrow*, is the time to work. Where will you be *to-morrow*? Perhaps in the icy arms of death! and your spirit before the judgment bar of Jehovah. What account would you then give of your abused time and privileges — of your leisure hours, spent in idleness — in sin — in sport without measure — in public houses — in protracted visits — in foolish and filthy talking, and jesting, and in defaming others, while there was not a word said about Heaven, eternity, salvation, the adored Saviour and the God of all grace and comfort.

All this time, you have put off the great work of

salvation to a convenient season. But that imaginary season will probably never come. *Now* is the accepted time, before the night comes when no man can work. Improve it with double diligence. God only knows how long it may continue ; but every hour it is growing less. O, seize the present moment ! Pray with more fervency ; give all diligence to make your calling and election sure ; press on to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Think how happy they are who have believed in Christ — mourned over their sins — improved the time and means of salvation, and are prepared for their final departure from this vain and sinful world. Their troubles and trials are over — their warfare is accomplished — a crown of life is laid up for them — God is their everlasting light, and the days of their mourning are ended.

“ This is the day of your acceptance, O, ye impenitent — a day of Gospel teaching — a day of precious privileges — a day of grand opportunities ; but a day which will soon be followed by a night that has no end. The time is short : therefore, what you have to do, do it quickly, and with all your strength. Every moment you now lose is more precious than gold ; for each minute that flits along towards eternity, bears with it some portion of the life-blood of your souls. Soon you will pass the point beyond which it is impossible to retrace your steps ; and then you will be

utterly undone. *To-day*, you may know the things which belong to your peace ; *to-morrow* — the sad *to-morrow*, in which the Saviour ceases to plead and only weeps — all these things will be hid from your eyes."

Remember, you must *give an account* of your time and privileges ; and this account will be one of joy, or of grief, according to the use you have made of them. If you let them all pass without improvement for eternity, you will mourn at the last, and say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof ; and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me. I might have obtained mansions of everlasting bliss ; but now I must dwell in the dark regions of eternal woe ! Time is past forever — the Gospel call, and promises of mercy are gone forever. Now darkness and despair reign without one ray of hope — now the warnings and invitations of God, and the entreaties of pious friends, once kindly given, but disregarded, fill me with extreme anguish, self-reproach, and remorse.

Then, of how much value and importance is the *present* moment to prepare for eternity ! May all view these things in their true light — may all, old and young, in every station and employment of life, improve time with a wise reference to eternity, and abandon everything that would hinder them from serving the Lord faithfully. After John Newton's con-

version, and a full view of the immense value of time, he thought life too short and important to admit of leisure for *elaborate trifling* in wordly science, and therefore gave up his newly acquired riches—the *Classics* and the *Mathematics*; the former, because neither poet, nor historian could tell him a word about Jesus; and the latter, because they cost him so much time, and engrossed his thoughts, and filled his mind with schemes, and cold speculative truths, which steal the heart from God, and from the vast concerns of an eternal scene. How unlike that devoted servant of the Lord, are those who make the ministry subordinate to the Classics, and Mathematics, and wordly interests! How little of the spirit of the Gospel dwells in them! How can they preserve the ministry from blame, follow the Lord fully, profit the people, and *watch for souls*, as they that must give an account? Is not life too short—time of too much value—and the ministry of too much importance, to be encumbered with elaborate trifling in worldly science, or in the affairs of this life? The learned Salmasius, who had spent his life in the pursuit of wordly science, said on his death-bed: “O! I have lost a world of time! If one year more were added to my life, it should be spent in reading David’s Psalms, and Paul’s Epistles.”

Let every monitor of the flight, and brevity, and uncertainty, and value, and final departure of time

warn you to improve the present moment — let the bitter lamentation of a dying sinner warn you, lest in the hour of death, you will cast a wishful look on all you are leaving, and say : O, that I had been wise ; that I had understood this ; that I had considered my latter end ! Alas ! death is knocking at my door. In a few hours I shall draw my last breath, and then judgment, the tremendous judgment ! How shall I appear unprepared before the omniscient and omnipotent Judge of all ! Salvation is the only thing I now need. I have not words to tell its value. I would gladly part with worlds to obtain it ; for now I see the things that are truly excellent. What is there to be desired on earth, except holiness and its blessed results — what is there to be desired in the place where I am going, except a God of love and mercy to me ? If God would spare me a short time, I would labor for holiness, as I shall soon labor for life. The riches, honors and pleasures of this vain world are of no account — all is vanity and vexation of spirit. If God would spare me a little longer, how differently would I spend the remainder of my days ! I would make his glory and my own salvation the great aim and end of my life. Whatever contributed to that — the means, opportunity, and time — would be dearer to me than thousands of gold and silver. But alas ! this is a fruitless wish. The best resolutions are now vain, because too late. The time in which I should

have worked is gone, and I see a dark and dismal night approaching—the night of eternal darkness! Woe is me, for I am undone! When God called, I refused—when he invited, I made excuse; therefore, I now receive the just reward of my deeds. Fear and trembling are come upon me—extreme anguish has already taken hold on me; yet it is only the *beginning of sorrows!* I am undone, and will soon be destroyed with an everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. The knell of my departed hours already sounds the alarm, and tells the vast importance of the present moment.

“The bell strikes one—we take no note of time
But from its loss—to give it then a tongue
Is wise in man. As if an angel spoke
I feel the solemn sound; if heard aright
It is the knell of my departed hours.
Where are they? with the years beyond the flood.
It is the signal, that demands dispatch.
How much is to be done? My hopes and fears
Start up alarm’d, and o’er life’s narrow verge
Look down—on what? a fathomless abyss,
A dread eternity!”

Then improve time for eternity. Improve the present moment. We entreat you by the majesty and mercy of the Lord; by the meekness and gentleness of Christ; by his infinite condescension, and extreme poverty and reproach; by his tears and compassion, agonies and invitations; by the memory of

what he said and did through life, and suffered in death, amid the desertion of friends, and the reproach and rage of enemies ; by the unutterable agonies of the Cross, when he bore our sins and uttered that touching cry — “ My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ! ” We entreat you by the labors of those men who are spending their lives for your salvation ; by the ruin of those who have trifled away the day of grace, and died in their sins ; and by the happiness of those who have improved that day and obtained eternal life. We entreat you by the value of your souls ; by the terrors of dissolving nature ; by the scenes of the tremendous judgment — the triumphs of the blessed, and the agonies of the lost ; and by the strength of all these combined, as you will answer in the last great day, that you *now* embrace Jesus as your glorious and almighty Saviour, who is both able and willing to save to the uttermost all who come to God by him. We entreat you by the rapidity, brevity, uncertainty, value and departure of time, to improve the present period. Redeem your time because the days are evil — redeem your hours — redeem your moments, for in your glass the sands are shivering, when you and time must part forever.

“ The clock of Time, how loud it strikes,
Its wheels, how swift they fly ;
Its fingers, as they onward move
Point to eternity.”

XI.

THE JOY OF SALVATION.

“ The joy that fades is not for me,
I seek immortal joys above ;
Where glory without end shall be
The bright reward of faith and love.”

JOY is a pleasing emotion of the mind, arising from the possession or anticipation of some good. It arises from the possession of health, the enjoyment of friends and the success of business ; from the riches, honors and pleasures of the world ; from deliverance from captivity, bonds and imprisonment and impending ruin ; from the contemplation of beauty, novelty and greatness ; from the variety, magnitude and sublimity of nature's works, and from the bloom of spring, when each object smiles and all nature sings for joy. Joy rose in the heart of Noah, when he saw in his own salvation from the great deluge, the final salvation of all believers. It rose in the soul of righteous Lot, when by divine favor he escaped from the sulphurous flames of the devoted city ; and in the bosom of Israel, when on his way to the land of promise, he sung, “The Lord hath triumphed gloriously ; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.” In every province

and city of Ahasuerus, the Jews had joy and gladness, when they obtained deliverance from their impending ruin. The wise men of the East rejoiced with exceeding great joy when they saw the Star of Bethlehem, leading them to the promised Saviour. Every one who triumphs over his enemies, or who finds great spoil, or accomplishes some great object, feels an emotion of joy. It is felt on earth and in heaven, when the lost is found, or the prodigal returns to his Father's house. So far as this pleasing emotion arises from the sensibilities of our nature, it is common to all men ; but moral joy arises from the performance of good actions. The world has its joy, and the Christian has joy of which the world has no knowledge. It is joy which monarchs cannot give, nor prisons bind, nor all the powers of earth and hell, confederate, take away. It is obtained from a sense of pardoning mercy ; and when suspended by sin, the penitent cries, " Make me to hear the voice of joy and gladness — restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." He knows that God can do all things, and does all things well, and overrules all things for his present and future welfare. Here he sees love in all its loveliness, power in all its sublimity, wisdom in all its variety, goodness in all its excellence, and justice harmonizing with mercy for his redemption ; and he obtains joy inexpressible. All the joys that spring from earth, are only as the shadow to the substance, in comparison with the joy of salvation.

THIS JOY ARISES FROM THE WORD OF GOD. "Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." Jer. xv: 16. It contains doctrines to be believed — precepts to be obeyed — promises to be obtained, and songs of praise to be eternally sung. It contains all that pertains to life and godliness. When it is applied to our hearts by the Holy Spirit, it fills them with *joy and peace in believing*.

It is from the Word of God that we learn the nature and extent of our privileges, and our perpetual security. Then we highly esteem this Word, feel a deep and personal interest in it, and enjoy the greatest pleasure and satisfaction in its contemplation. What increasing interest does the believer take in the Word of God, and in the adored Saviour! How does his soul glow with holy joy, when, relying on the promises, he appropriates Jesus to himself, and calls the joys of Heaven his own! Hear his triumphant language in the darkest hour of adversity: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us; for I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth,

nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The Word of God illuminates the darkest events, furnishes a sure ground of faith, preserves alive our hopes, and turns our wailings into songs of joy and praise. Relying on the promises of the Word, we rejoice in tribulation, and feel no evil while passing through the lonely valley of the shadow of death. Under the seeming frowns of Providence we may walk in darkness many days; but the Word speaks in language of mercy and love: "Your darkness shall be turned into light" — "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" — "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine: When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee; for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour."

Isa. xliii: 1-3.

Joy springs from the *promises*, and from the *preaching of the Gospel*. It is glad tidings of great joy unto all people. What was the condition of the world when the first promise of the Gospel was made to our

fallen race? It was ruined and helpless. Man was driven from the garden of Eden, and Cherubim were set, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the Tree of Life. The crown was fallen from his head, and he was sent forth into a world of sin and sorrow, doomed to labor and toil, and finally to death, endless and hopeless. Fallen, and wretched, and helpless, he could not satisfy the claims of that holy law which he had violated; nor make atonement for sin; nor open the door of mercy which he had barred against himself and his posterity. No relief was found; for no messenger of peace had visited this apostate world. On all sides ruin prevailed—*awful ruin*—including eternal sin and eternal suffering, and excluding all good—all light and all love—God in all his goodness—Christ in all his loveliness—the Spirit with all his saving influences, and Heaven with all its felicity. Not a ray of hope was left. Not a prayer for life and salvation ascended as sweet incense to the throne of God, from our apostate race. All was dark and desolate—a ruin vast, on all sides terrible. “A desert of ruin spread immeasurably around them, without a habitation to which they might betake themselves for shelter, or even a friendly hermit to point out a hopeful end to their melancholy pilgrimage. Over their heads extended, without limits, a dreary and perpetual night, in which no lamp lighted their bewildered path, and

not a star, not a ray of hope or comfort twinkled through the vast gloom of sorrow and despair," until the tidings of a Saviour greeted this world of sin and woe.

O, what a source, what a fund of joy is found in the promises of the Gospel! To our first parents, stained with sin, and stung with remorse, the promise of a Saviour was a source of inexpressible joy. It is the same to every awakened sinner. Abraham rejoiced to see Christ's day: he saw it afar off, and was glad. The saints of old rejoiced in the coming of a promised Saviour, who is the desire of all nations. The wise men of the East saw the Star of Bethlehem, and rejoiced with exceeding great joy. The angel of the Lord announced to the shepherds of Judea, "Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord: and suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

We now rejoice in Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness who has come, and dispelled the gloom which long enveloped the world, and who has inspired us with a lively hope of glory, honor and immortality, when time shall be no more —when the tears of sin, and anguish, and persecution, and farewell shall all be dried up —

when the rags of poverty shall be exchanged for robes of righteousness, and the humble cottage for mansions of glory. Then the wailings of earth shall be turned into anthems of endless praise; then "the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away;" then God will be their everlasting light, and their God their glory; then the soul and body will reunite; the friends of the Bridegroom will meet and enter into the joy of their Lord, receive their glorious and unfading crown, dwell in his presence, and chant, in the sweetest and highest strains, the song of redeeming love. Then, in the presence of Jesus, they shall see him as he is, crowned with glory; all distance will be annihilated—all fellowship completed—all joy consummated. Now, "whom having not seen ye love, in whom, though now ye see him not, yet, believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." But then face to face, and ever with the Lord, will soothe all sorrows and consummate all joy. In his presence is fullness of joy; at his right hand are pleasures forever-more. In his kingdom, they will reign and sing *Allelulia*, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. The shining robes with which they will be clothed, will conceal all the poverty and shame of mortality, and bury their sorrows beneath the glory of his throne. He who died for our sins sways the

sceptre of that kingdom, places them on his throne, seats them at his table, feeds them with the Bread of Life and allays their thirst with the Water of Life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb. No clouds and storms will ever raise the melancholy thought, that this kingdom will finally be overthrown, and become like *the chaff of the summer threshing floor* ; for it stands on the pillars of truth and holiness, eternal as the existence of Jehovah ; and in it, all is light, and love, and righteousness, and peace, and *joy in the Holy Ghost*.

Then may we not with joy draw water out of this well of salvation ? May we not rejoice in that word which has brought life and immortality to light ? May we not exclaim, “How precious is thy word of truth, O Lord of Hosts, to me ! How precious is the promise of eternal life which thou hast given us in Christ Jesus ! How full of joy and consolation to our souls ! No such joy is felt in the heathen world. There no word of consolation greets the ear — no beam of hope enlightens the slumbering eye — no messenger of peace brings to those desolate regions songs of joy and deliverance. God is unknown and unhonored, and the path of life and immortality is unoccupied and unsought. O, may this word of life be sent to the regions of the shadow of death, where the light is as darkness, and cause the voice of gladness, the voice of the Bridegroom and the voice of the Bride

to be heard ! Then the wilderness and solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose — then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped — then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing, for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. May the word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in our hearts to the Lord.

The Word of God is not only a means of salvation ; but also a source of great joy. In the language of Dr. Owen, “How many glorious mysteries do I see in it ! What purity, what spirituality, what holiness ! &c. — all which speak the wisdom, and power, and goodness, and holiness, and truth of the Author of it ! What sweetness have I tasted in it ! It has been as the honey and honey-comb to me. What power, what life, what strange energy have I experienced in it ! What a change has it wrought in me ! What lusts has it discovered and mortified ! What duties has it convinced me of and engaged me in ! What strength has it furnished me with ! How has it quickened me when I was dead in sin ; revived my comforts when they were dying ; actuated my graces when they were languishing ; roused me up when I was sluggish ; awakened me when I was dreaming ; refreshed me

when I was sorrowful ; supported me when I was sinking ; answered my doubts, conquered my temptations, scattered my fears, enlarged me with desires, and filled me with *joy* unspeakable and full of glory ! And what word could ever have wrought such effects ; but that of the eternal, all-wise, all-powerful God ! ”

THE JOY OF SALVATION ARISES FROM OUR ENDEARING RELATION TO GOD. “ I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” This is, at least, one of the most precious and comprehensive promises in all the Bible. It includes all that pertains to the paternal relation — all that the soul and body can receive, and all that God in love and mercy can bestow on finite creatures : wisdom to instruct and guide us in the way of peace — fullness to supply all our wants — power to protect us from all injuries and enemies — pity and compassion to soothe all our sorrows — love to sustain and comfort us amidst all the ills of life, and the gloom of the grave — and after death, to give us an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Then, from this time I will cry unto God : “ My Father, thou art the guide of my youth ” — “ Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.” Jehovah is my strength and my song ; he also is become my salvation. He is my Father and portion forever. He is the most glorious being in the universe ; and the contemplation, that he stands in the

endearing relation of Father, awakens in every believer emotions of admiration and joy, infinitely more than all the wealth, and honors, and pleasures of the world. "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him." "Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."

Here is the source of the believer's joy and of his eternal felicity. He has all he can desire, and more than he can conceive. He is satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and with joyful lips praises Him who is his *all in all*. There is no good which the saints "may despair of obtaining, for the riches of his goodness are pledged to supply their wants, and the fullness of heaven itself is but a part of what he is able to bestow. Are they in solitude, forsaken by the world and by their friends? God is always near to cheer their lonely hours with sweeter enjoyments than those of friendship and love. Do the afflictions of life come upon them? While they are assured that these shall not separate them from his love, they can trace the footsteps of their Father in the darkness and the tempest, and discover wisdom and goodness in apparent disorder and severity; they kiss the rod which is wielded by his gracious hand, and welcome the stripes which promote the health of their souls. As soon as a man can look upon the God of his salvation as his own (and this is the privilege of these who

have been admitted into a state of grace), the scenery around assumes a new aspect, and displays charms which never before met the eye. He beholds everywhere objects of pleasing admiration, and causes of heart-melting gratitude. Nature shines with the glory of its Maker. Mercies acquire a sweeter relish — afflictions lose half their bitterness — life rises in value, as the gift of love for purposes of infinite importance — death is divested of its terrors — the present is the seed-time of grace, and the future is the harvest of glory. He enjoys God in everything, and everything in God."

He enjoys him when everything else fails to impart joy. He says: "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." This is an example of the most vigorous and triumphant faith anywhere found. The language is used in prospect of the greatest calamity, arising from the Chaldean army coming against the Israelites to avenge the quarrel of God's covenant. In their march everything is laid in ruin. The land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness. The earth mourneth and fadeth away. The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the

merry-hearted do sigh. The fig-tree yields no blossoms, the vine no fruit, the fields no meat. There is no herd in the stalls; the necessities and luxuries of life are cut off; the future is overcast with darkness, distress and want. Wine that makes glad the heart of man, and oil that makes his face shine, and bread which strengthens his heart, have failed before his eyes. He cannot wash his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes; for the vintage has failed. The Chaldeans have carried away their camels, the Sabeans their oxen and asses; the fire of heaven has burnt up their sheep and their servants, and the wind from the wilderness has overthrown their houses, and buried their children beneath the ruins. They are left naked and bare as the trees when they had gathered the summer fruit; yet, with unshaken confidence, he declares: I will rejoice in the Lord; I will joy in the God of my salvation. All refuge has failed—all is gone, except my God. To him I fly for all my wants. Yet will I look unto the Lord; I will wait upon the God of my salvation. When the streams are dried up, I will go to God, the Fountain of all Good. The light of his countenance puts more joy in my heart than the abundance of corn and wine, and all things in the universe. His favor is life to my soul. He is my shepherd; I shall not want. Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him; for "He who feeds the ravens will give his children bread."

“ Though vine, nor fig-tree neither,
Their wonted fruit shall bear,
Though all the fields should wither,
Nor flocks, nor herds be there ;
Yet God, the same abiding,
His praise shall tune my voice ;
For while in him confiding,
I cannot but rejoice.”

Oh ! that we may have this vigorous and appropriating faith, and learn this triumphant song — “ I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation — he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels ” — I will joy in the God of my salvation, in whom are all my delights. Without God as our Father and portion, we will be in want amidst sumptuous fare and treasures of fine gold. Our vines and fig-trees, and fields, and folds, will not long prosper. All our goods laid up for many years, may perish in a night — in a moment. Friends may and will die — flesh and heart will faint and fail, and in all the fullness of our sufficiency, we will be in want and in straits. But having God for our Father, we will have a soul-satisfying portion — a fountain of inexhaustible good — a source of endless joy. His blessing will descend on us, and our souls shall rejoice in him — Heaven will shine with transcendent lustre as our eter-

nal home — nature will smile in all her beauty — our worldly pursuits and pleasures will have a new and sweeter relish — God will be our refuge and our strength ; he will satisfy our souls in drought ; sustain us in the greatest extremity, and finally receive us to abide with him in glory. The belief, that this God is our God and Father, and that we stand to him in the endearing relation of children, creates joy which springs not from earth ; which outlives time, and which glows in the soul through all eternity.

“ A deity believed, is joy begun ;
A deity adored, is joy advanced ;
A deity beloved, is joy matured ;
Each branch of piety delight inspires.”

Happy are they who have this piety — happy is he who has the Spirit of adoption, and cries to God in faith and love : “ My Father, thou art the guide of my youth.” Yea happy is that people whose God is the Lord. The eternal God is their refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. They shall dwell in safety. Happy art thou, O Israel : who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord ; the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency ! Immortal joys are in store for you.

“ Happy beyond description he
Who *fears* the Lord his God,
Who hears his threats with holy awe,
And trembles at his rod.

Let fear and love, most holy God,
Possess this soul of mine;
Then shall I worship Thee aright,
And taste thy joys divine."

UNION TO JESUS CHRIST BRINGS THE JOY OF SALVATION TO OUR SOULS. This mystical, happy and indissoluble union to Jesus is a source of pure, substantial and immortal joy. He is our blessed and only Saviour. To him all believers are united by faith, and by the Spirit of truth and holiness — united as the branch is to the vine — as the members of the body are to the head — as the building is to the foundation; and notwithstanding their remaining depravity, daily offenses and failures in duty, they look to him as their head and husband, their glorious Redeemer, and all-prevailing Advocate with the Father. From him they derive all their life, nourishment and righteousness. His blood cleanses them from all sin, and for his sake God pardons and accepts them as righteous in his sight. In themselves they see no ground of joy — they see nothing but cause of fear and despondency; but in him, they see every ground of confidence and unceasing joy. They see all divine excellence — all the fullness of the Godhead. They see him as the First and the Last — the Alpha and the Omega — over all God blessed forever, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace. From him flow all the blessings which cheer the path of life, and render

eternity happy. All the beauties of creation shine, and all the glories of redemption are effected by God, manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. Rapt in prophetic vision, Isaiah saw him on his throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the Seraphim, and one cried to another and said, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts ; the whole earth is full of his glory." In more exalted strains than were ever sung by Homer and Hesiod, David and all the inspired prophets sung of Him, as the glorious king and head of Zion : "Thou art fairer than the children of men ; grace is poured into thy lips" — "Thy throne O God, is forever and ever ; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre" — "His name shall endure forever ; His name shall be continued as long as the sun, and men shall be blessed in him, and all nations shall call him blessed."

How literally is this prophetic song fulfilled ! He is the true Light which has come into the world. He has enlightened the Gentiles ; and millions of depraved, ruined and wretched creatures, have been redeemed by his blood, and found peace and joy in believing on him. At his name every knee shall bow ; and every tongue shall confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Saints on earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying :

“Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.”

From everlasting he was self-existent, infinite, and unchangeable in the glorious perfections of Deity. All things were made by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. He was clothed with light as with a garment, and angels veiled their faces in his presence. “To obey him was their highest honor ; to please him was their greatest happiness. In his service they employed all their powers, and found all their transports. Suns lighted up their fires at his bidding ; systems rolled to fulfill his pleasure ; and, to accomplish his designs, immensity was stored with worlds and their inhabitants.” When he looked on all things in the universe, he saw “nothing but the works of his own hands, reflecting the boundless beauty, greatness and glory which, in forms and varieties infinite, were treasured up from everlasting in his incomprehensible mind. Heaven, throughout her vast regions, had from the beginning echoed to his praise. The morning stars had sung his perfections from their birth, and the sons of God shouted his name for joy. The everlasting hymn from that exalted and delightful world had ever been, blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. His own mind was the mansion of all things great, excellent

and delightful. Pure from every stain, free from every error, serene without a cloud, secure beyond a fear, and conscious of wisdom and holiness only, himself was an ocean of eternal and overflowing good." Then what a source of joy is union to such a Saviour ! From everlasting he was the Father's well-beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased ; as one brought up with him, daily his delight, rejoicing always before him. From him let us draw our pure and lasting joys. In him may our thoughts and affections be concentrated. In him may we live, and die, in preference to all the withering beauties, fading glory, and fleeting joy of this world. He is one in our nature, and has a fellow-feeling with our infirmities. Though equal with God, he made himself of no reputation, and took on him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man, that he might redeem our souls, and fill them with everlasting joy. He who made the world, and supplies out of his vast store-house the wants of everything that lives — who guides with unerring harmony the whole universe, and shines in Heaven with supreme splendor, became a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief, to save our souls and give us songs of everlasting joy. Ruined, wretched, and helpless, we fly to his atonement for pardon, life, peace, and joy. We linger around his Cross, and draw consolation from his bleeding wounds, from his promises, his pity and love ; from his death, resurrection, and all-prevalent inter-

cession before the throne of Jehovah. O, what inexpressible joy must arise from union by faith to a Saviour of such incomparable excellence—a Saviour in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily—a Saviour in whom compassions flow, and with whom the fatherless find mercy—a Saviour *suited to our wants—all-sufficient, altogether lovely!*

He is the *only* Saviour—no other name is given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, than the name Jesus. To every weary and heavy laden sinner he says, “Come unto me and I will give you rest.” When about to leave his disciples, and go to his Father, and our Father, in Heaven, he said to them, “Ye shall be sorrowful; but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.” In the last great day, he will say to each member of his mystical body: “Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the *joy* of thy Lord.” Then let all who would receive the joy of their Lord, be united to Christ, the living Head of the redeemed. He dwells in every believer, and they live in him, and draw all their life and nourishment from him. “I live,” says Paul “yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” As the head guides the members; as the foundation supports the building, and as the

branch draws all its life and beauty from the vine, so Jesus guides our feet in the way of peace ; on him we lean while going through this ensnaring world ; from him we derive all our life, fruit, beauty and endless joy, and on him rest all our hopes of glory and immortality beyond the grave.

“ Touched by a sense of love divine,
Thy goodness, Lord, I feel ;
What *joy* to call the Saviour mine !
Of endless *joys* the seal !

Oh ! let me taste thy goodness more,
Each moment as it flies ;
Till landed safe on Canaan's shore,
Where glory never dies,

I see my Saviour face to face,
Without a veil between ;
And sing loud praises to *His* grace,
Who saved my soul from sin.”

THE TESTIMONY OF THE SPIRIT CAUSES THE JOY OF SALVATION IN THE BELIEVER. This Divine agent takes possession of his soul, and dwells in him as the earnest of the inheritance of the saints in light. He is the Comforter which Jesus has promised, and has sent to abide with him forever. He bears witness with the spirit of every believer, that he is a child of God and an heir of glory. In a way peculiar to himself, he exerts his divine and saving power in the souls of all believers, and causes that soul-satisfying joy which

no unbeliever ever experienced. He produces silently and powerfully his own precious fruits in the soul — “love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against which there is no law.” “As a Divine person, he inhabits the temple of the universe; and heaven and earth are sustained, and beautified, and enlivened by his influence; but he selects the souls of believers as the scene of his gracious operations. There he is present as the Spirit of Truth and Consolation; and it is his office to diffuse the cheering and tranquilizing light of heaven; to shed a divine serenity over the thoughts and feelings; to inspire and strengthen good principles; to elevate the affections above secular objects; to give a taste of the sweetness of spiritual things; to awaken hope, with all its blissful anticipations,” and to give transports of joy. He is in believers as a well of living water, springing up into everlasting life. Like a fountain which is in perpetual motion, and pours out its streams in summer and in winter, he exerts his gracious power in youth, in manhood, and in old age, to promote the growth of grace, and to give them a foretaste of celestial bliss. The joy of the Christian is, therefore, not only pure, but permanent. No man can take it from him. It is in him a well of living water, springing up into everlasting life. Wherever he goes — in whatever situation he dwells — however obscure and remote from the busy world, his joy remains. He

is satisfied from the communications of this Divine inmate, whose presence is life, and whose favor is the sunshine of the soul.

But believers do not always have *transports* of joy in this life. It is not consistent with their present state, to be always elevated above the world. They must mingle with the world, endure its trials, discharge its duties ; and such transports as they sometimes have, would unfit them for the duties of life. Transports of joy are only occasional with even the most eminent Christians ; and they generally have no more than tranquillity of mind, and *sober joy*, arising from faith and hope in God, and from the testimony of the Holy Spirit. Their state is always safe, but their feelings are not always comfortable. Their peace and joy are always in proportion to their faith, and their intimate and faithful walk with God. Sin, in any form, will interrupt their joy, hide God's face, and destroy the evidence of their interest in the Lord Jesus. It will fill their souls with indescribable anguish, cause them to go mourning without the sun many days, and cost them many prayers and tears before they can recover the joy of salvation. Listen to the pitiful complaint of the royal penitent, when sin had deprived him of this joy : "Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled. O Lord, rebuke me not in thy wrath, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure ; for thine arrows stick fast in me, and thine hand

presseth me sore ; there is no soundness in my flesh, because of thine anger ; neither is there any rest in my bones, because of my sin. I am troubled ; I am bowed down greatly ; I go mourning all the day long ; neither can I be silent in the night season. Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness ; make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Hide thy face from my sin, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit."

Then, to preserve the joy arising from the testimony of the Spirit, let us not grieve him ; but be holy, and faithful, and zealous in our walk with God. How great is the goodness God has prepared for his people ? "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." Be faithful unto death, and you shall receive a crown of life — you shall receive the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls ; "of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you ; searching what, or what manner of time, the *Spirit* of Christ,

which was in them, did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

When this Spirit of Christ dwells in you, life will flow on in the pure, tranquil pleasures of religion, and death will come *to fill up the measure of your joy in the celestial world*. May we always have the testimony of the Spirit to soothe our sorrow in this vale of tears, and to fill up the measure of our joys in that world where God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes!

" O ! blest assurance this,
Bright beam of heav'nly day ;
Sweet earnest of eternal bliss,
To cheer the pilgrim's way.

Thus will our joys increase,
Our love more ardent grow ;
While all the fruits of faith and peace
Refresh our souls below.

But Oh ! the bliss sublime,
When joy shall be complete,
In that unclouded glorious clime,
Where all thy servants meet.

There shall the ransom'd throng
A Saviour's love record,
And shout in everlasting song,
Salvation to the Lord."

THE JOY OF SALVATION ARISES FROM THE EVIDENCE OF OUR NAMES BEING WRITTEN IN HEAVEN. When the

Spirit bears witness to this, and our hearts do not condemn us, it is the greatest cause of rational, soul-stirring, and lasting joy. It is greater than that of one who finds great spoil — greater than that of bodily health, friends, civil liberty, religious privileges, long life, honor and fame, and the subjection of evil spirits. “Rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice *because your names are written in Heaven.* LU. x : 20. It is a cause of joy and gratitude to God, that we are not in extreme want for the necessities of life; that we are not in pining sickness, or feeble health; that we are not slaves, or tributaries to a foreign power; and that we have the Gospel, and means of salvation. But O, how much greater cause of joy is it, that we have the unsearchable riches of Christ; that we have spiritual health and prosperity; that God is our Father, Jesus our Saviour, and the Holy Spirit our Sanctifier and Comforter; that we are delivered from sin and Satan, and have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has written our names in the Book of Life! O, rejoice in this! “Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice ye righteous, and shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart.” Rejoice even now in hope of the glory of God; rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice! Let your sorrow be turned into joy, and do not go in a melancholy mood to Heaven. While graceless sinners have cause to mourn and weep, you have the greatest cause

of heart-felt joy — greater than if your names were enrolled in the annals of fame. Even if you have not the assured evidence which you desire, yet, if you have a good hope through grace, you have the greatest cause of joy. Though you may be poor and despised, and afflicted in the world — though you may stand friendless and alone, and enemies may triumph, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, and cast out your names as evil ; yet, since God is your portion, and your names are written in Heaven, rejoice and be exceeding glad.

But those whose names are not written in Heaven have no cause of solid and lasting joy ; neither can they rest in any situation of life. Though they may dwell in stately mansions ; be clothed in purple, and fare sumptuously every day ; be in health, and receive titles and honor from men ; be successful in business, move in the highest circles, take the timbrel and harp, and chant to the sound of the viol ; yet they have no cause of true and substantial joy. They have neglected their souls' salvation, and their songs will soon be turned into wailings of endless woe ; their gorgeous apparel will be exchanged for flames of devouring fire, and their gay friends for the society of infernal spirits. How great the change ! How terrible their misery ! In this life they have received their good things ; but then they will be tormented. They have been full ; but then they shall hunger. They have laughed ; but

then they shall mourn and weep. Their laughter shall be turned to mourning, and their joy to heaviness ! O, then, ye gay, yet miserable sinners ! flee to Christ while there is hope — use diligently and faithfully the means of salvation, and get your names written in Heaven, and you also will have joy inexpressible and full of glory. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and holy men and angels will rejoice with you, with exceeding joy. No more seek pure joy from creature comforts, where it never can be found ; for —

“ Joy is a fruit that will not grow

In nature’s barren soil ;

All we can boast till Christ we know,

Is vanity and toil.

But where the Lord has planted grace,

And made his glories known ;

There fruits of heavenly joy and peace

Are found, and there alone.

A bleeding Saviour seen by faith,

A sense of pardoning love,

A hope that triumphs over death,

Give joys like those above.

To take a glimpse within the veil,

To know that God is mine,

Are springs of joy that never fail,

Unspeakable ! divine !

These are the joys that satisfy,

And sanctify the mind ;

Which make the spirit mount on high,

And leave the world behind.

No more, believers, mourn your lot;
But if you are the Lord's,
Resign to them that know him not,
Such joys as earth affords."

THE ENTIRE PLAN OF SALVATION BY JESUS CHRIST CREATES THIS JOY. It inspires the believer with a lively hope of eternal felicity, and enables him to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. He is "begotten to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled and that fadeth not away." He can say, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whence joy to us is brought." This hope transports him from the scenes around, to brighter and happier ones beyond the narrow vale of time. It brings to his mind the transcendent glory which awaits him in the world to come; transports him beyond the confines of time, and fixes his heart and desires on the realities of eternity. A view of these glories renders the ills and sorrows of the world light, and its pleasures trifling, in comparison with the glory and joy, which await him in Heaven. It elevates his feelings, and warms his heart with ardent love to the Saviour. It is cherished by the Holy Spirit, as the earnest of his future inheritance, and strengthened by his divine operations, preparing him for the happiness of Heaven. It reconciles him to his lot; elevates him above the influence of temporal things, and assures him that his present

sufferings are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in him.

This plan of salvation is all of grace, free, unmerited, grace abounding to the chief of sinners. It removes our doubts, stills our fears, and keeps our souls in peace amidst our conflict with sin and Satan, and the world. By this plan we continue in the grace which is in Christ Jesus, become strong, overcome the world, and rise above that religion which has more form than power, and which has sunk "from its primitive loftiness, into a tame second-rate inferior thing," and makes us shrink from the fullness of grace, and from a holier and happier life, resting satisfied with religion, just enough to save us.

Blessed is the man that grows in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ — blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord and whose hope the Lord is — blessed is the man who is seeking salvation by grace, for he shall not seek in vain. The Lord will give grace, and he will give glory.

Grace is given irrespective of anything we possess ; have said or done ; and we will find in the history of our lives, that new sins brought from the fountain, new supplies of grace before unknown to exist. O, how rich, how free, how full is the grace that brings salvation ! It "is ever gushing forth upon us to sweep away each new sin ; yet, in doing so, it makes the sin thus swept away appear more hideous and inexcusa-

ble ;" sin does not appear less vile, on account of abounding grace, but viler still.

The history of the Church and of every believer is one of "abounding sin, met by more abounding grace." "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant, with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus; and still there are brighter discoveries of this grace yet to come, when our feet shall stand on the golden streets of the New Jerusalem. Then, will appear the grace that is to be brought to us at the revelation of Jesus Christ; then, the head-stone of the spiritual temple will be brought with shoutings, of "Grace, grace unto it:" that in the ages to come, he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. When the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob, then grace will rise to a height of glory never before known. Every age has displayed the wonders of redeeming grace; but still, there is grace in store to make the believer rejoice — abounding grace — exceeding riches of grace to forgive all the sins of the true penitent — remove all his guilt — cleanse, and clothe, and strengthen, and comfort him — grace to give him a crown of life; place him on the throne of glory, and strike his golden harp with songs of everlasting joy.

Now combine all these causes: the Word of God—

our endearing relation to him — our union to Jesus Christ — the testimony of the Holy Spirit — the evidence of our names being written in Heaven, and the entire plan of salvation by grace, and it must be evident that the believer has unfailing wells of inexpressible and everlasting joy. It is present — future — divine — soul-satisfying and eternal joy. The consoling words of Jesus to his disciples in sorrow are : “ I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.” It sustains and cheers the believer amidst all the ills of life ; the sorrows of death, and the gloom of the grave, and enables him to rejoice in hope of the glory that shall be brought to him at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

“ His piety is a seed sown here in an unkind, barren soil, indeed, and under a wintry climate ; but it will live, and grow until it shall be transplanted to a happier region beneath a more friendly sky, where it will shoot forth its native strength and beauty. The flame of divine love, kindled feebly in his heart, will never cease to burn, until it shall rise and glow with unextinguishable ardor beyond the grave. The light which here dawns in darkness, and fully illumines the surrounding gloom, will perpetually shine brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. All his sins and sorrows will continually lessen, and recede, and fade ; all his graces, consolations and hopes, will expand and improve until the imperfect good, which he finds

in this vale of tears, shall be lost in the everlasting beauty, happiness and glory of Heaven." Then his joy will be complete, inexpressible, and full of glory. O, Lord, may this be our happy experience !
Oh,

" How sweet the sacred joy that dwells
In souls renew'd by power divine ;
Where Jesus all his goodness tells :
Oh ! may this joy be ever mine !

Descend and bless thy servant, Lord,
Thy loving Spirit now impart ;
Speak Thou, the all-enlivening word,
And seal salvation to my heart.

From earth and all its fleeting toys,
Be all my fond desires withdrawn ;
Oh ! fill my soul with heavenly joys,
Of endless bliss, the glorious dawn.

Then shall my raptured spirit sing,
In strains of pure celestial love ;
When borne on some kind seraph's wing
I soar to brighter worlds above."

XII.

THE AUTHOR OF SALVATION.

“ O, unexampled Love !

Love nowhere to be found less than divine !

Hail, Son of God, *Saviour* of men ! Thy name

Shall be the copious matter of my song

Henceforth, and never shall my harp Thy praise

Forget, nor from Thy Father's praise disjoin.”

WHAT a most glorious and exalted person is Jesus, the Author of eternal salvation ! Before him all creatures, and actions done by men and angels, disappear, absorbed and lost. What mind can conceive, or pen describe, his supreme glory and excellence ? Who can tell the sacrifices he made, and the sufferings he endured, for our redemption ? Indeed, the answer to questions of so vast importance, sublimity and interest, surpasses all finite power. God only can answer them. The Bible alone furnishes a true history of his unblemished character, and divine excellence ; his sacrifices and his sufferings for a lost world. In it, he is represented by metaphors, natural, beautiful and lovely ; and to him are ascribed names, titles, attributes, works and worship belonging to Deity alone. He is the sum of all excellence and perfection, and is altogether lovely.

He is presented under many beautiful similes ; as, the Star of Jacob ; the Sun of Righteousness ; the Light of the World ; the Rose of Sharon ; the Lily of the Valleys ; the Rock of Ages ; and the Rock of our Salvation. Oh, may the Living Water which flows from this Rock, smitten for our sins, cleanse and heal our souls ! May we hide in its clefts from the storm and tempest of divine wrath, and here build all our hopes of glory ! May that Star guide us through the journey of life, and death's dark vale, until our feet shall stand on the golden streets of the New Jerusalem, and our eyes behold it shining with supreme and eternal splendor !

He is Immanuel, God with us ; the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth ; the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person. His name is *Wonderful ; Counsellor ; the Mighty God ; the Everlasting Father ; the Prince of Peace*. “Thy Maker is thy husband ; the Lord of Hosts is his name, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel ; *the God of the whole earth shall he be called*.” “In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely, and this is his name whereby he shall be called : ‘THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.’” Je. xxiii : 6.

His blood contains infinite value and efficacy to cleanse, heal and beautify the soul, and remove sins great as mountains, and numberless as the sand of the sea, the stars of heaven, the leaves of the forest, and the

dew of the morning. It is a suitable and all-sufficient remedy for all sin. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." Blessed Saviour! Thou Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief; who hast a fellow feeling with our infirmities; send thy Holy Spirit to apply this blood to our souls—to revive our spirits, enlarge our hearts, and turn our sorrows into songs of joy and praise!

"O *Saviour* God! O *Lamb*, once slain!

At thought of *Thee*, thy love, thy flowing blood,
All thoughts decay; all things remembered fade;
All hopes return; all actions done by men
Or angels disappear, absorbed and lost."

As to this Author, consider HIS DIVINE ORIGIN. He possesses divine attributes, exercises divine power, receives divine titles and homage, and bears the relation of Deity to his creatures. This doctrine is a fundamental article of our religion; one of pure revelation, and one of practical influence. From eternity he was in the bosom of the Father, "as one brought up with him, daily his delight, rejoicing always before him." He says: "Before Abraham was, I am"—"I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was"—"And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine ownself, with the glory which I had with thee *before the world was*." It is said: "The Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that *Eternal Life* which

was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.”

1 Jn. i : 2.

“His goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Then, before the world was, he existed in all the perfections of Deity, and had glory with the Father, from whom he came into this world in the fullness of time, to redeem them that were under the law. The phrase “To come in the flesh,” implies his pre-existence before his assumption of the human nature in union with the divine ; yea “He was before all things, and by him all things consist.” “Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts, I am the first, and I am the last, and besides me there is no God.” Is. xlv : 6. When John saw his glory in the isle of Patmos, he fell at his feet as dead, and he heard a voice saying : “Fear not, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last.” He is therefore co-existent and co-equal with the Father, who calls him, “*The man that is my Fellow*,” “who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.”

“Unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever ; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.” “And of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came who is *over all God blessed forever*.” Ro. ix : 5. In the sublime language of

Isaiah, he is "The Holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall he be called." In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphim, and one cried to another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory. In the New Testament, John applies this language to Jesus Christ when he says, "These things said Esaias when he saw his glory and spake of him"—"This is He that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." Jn. xii: 41; Mt. iii: 3.

Unlike his creatures, he is immutable. Amidst all the changes of this ever-changing world, he remains eternally the same—"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." "Thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands; they shall perish, but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." He. i: 10.

He fills immensity with his presence. "Am I a God at hand, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord?" Jer. xxiii: 6.

But who is this Divine person, who fills the entire universe? It is Jesus, the Lord of Glory; the God of the whole earth, who “came down from Heaven, and ascended up into Heaven, even the Son of Man who is in Heaven,” and who says, “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them” — “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”

He knows all our works, and ways, and wants; for he knows all things, even the thoughts and intents of the heart. No man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. He says: “I, the Lord, search the heart; I try the reins” — “All the churches shall know that I am He who searcheth the reins and hearts, and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.” *Re. ii: 23.*

He made and upholds all things by the word of his power, and does according to his will in heaven and on earth. He removeth the mountains and they know not. He shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble. He commandeth the sun, and it riseth not, and sealeth up the stars. He alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea. By him were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible; whether they be thrones, or dominions or

principalities, or powers, *all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*

Religious worship, the resurrection of the dead, and the judgment of the world belong to him. He is the Resurrection and the Life, and he that believeth in him though he were dead, yet shall he live. When the Son of Man is come in his glory, all nations shall be assembled before him. We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, to whom the Father hath committed all judgment.

He is the great prophet of the Highest — the High Priest of our profession, and the Author of eternal salvation, who in the time of his profound humiliation made atonement for sin, controlled the world, wrought miracles, bestowed supernatural gifts, breathed on the apostles, and said “Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” To him every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that *he is Lord to the glory of God the Father.* He is thy Lord and worship thou him, as did the martyr Stephen, and the wise men of the East, when they saw his star. Yea, let all the angels of God worship him. The angels of Heaven, and the redeemed from earth, all unite in celebrating his praise, as “*Over all God blessed forever.*” In the courts above, the angels echo back the everlasting song of the redeemed, “Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto

God and his Father. To him be glory and dominion forever and ever," and I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, saying with a loud voice : *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing.* Re. v : 12.

His divine nature is interwoven with the whole plan of redemption. To him it belongs to reveal the divine will ; to remove the veil from our hearts ; to subdue our wills ; to enlighten our minds ; to give the Holy Spirit and eternal life. He is "the head over all things, to the Church which is his body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all." He controls the universe — the bodies and souls of men — the elements and the invisible world. From everlasting he was self-existent, infinite and unchangeable in all divine perfections. Clothed with light as with a garment, he is adored by the seraphim around his throne, whom he sends to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation. The sun, moon and stars lighted up their fires at his bidding — systems rolled at his pleasure, and the world was stored with inhabitants to accomplish the vast designs of his incomprehensible mind. When the foundations of the earth were laid, the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. Heaven echoed to his praise, and the everlasting song of the redeemed will be, "*Blessing, and honor, and glory and power be unto him that sitteth*

upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever."

Re. 7: 13.

Consider HIS HUMBLE BIRTH. It is natural to suppose that one of such supreme excellence and glory, would have appeared on earth attended by angels in visible form; that kings would have cast their crowns at his feet; that all men would have paid him homage, and welcomed his advent with transports of joy, and that universal nature would have swelled the chorus of his praise. But how vastly different was his appearance! He "took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men"! He condescended to assume human nature, and humble himself to the lowest degree. "Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross." From the moment he became bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, his humiliation commenced, and ended not until he rose triumphant from the tomb. He appeared in the lowest state of human existence. Instead of being attended by the nobles of the earth, expressing joy at his birth, and paying homage to him whose *name is* WONDERFUL, COUNSELLOR, THE MIGHTY GOD, and whose dominion is over all; he was attended by none, except the angels who announced to the shepherds of Bethlehem the joyful tidings of his birth; and by the Magi, who guided by his star, came "to worship the young child and offer gifts."

His mother, though of the royal family, was not protected from the reproach cast on poverty. The honors of her parentage were obscured and forgotten by the miseries of her low condition in life. He humbled himself to be born of a woman, not of the most illustrious among men, but of one in the lowest rank of society; and "in conformity to the law, the condition of the mother determined the condition of her son," who, on account of his humble parentage, was regarded as the lowest of the low. O, infinite condescension! Astonishing humiliation! How little did any think that the Saviour of men, and the Judge of men and angels, was born in a stable, and laid in a manger! He was made of a woman, made under the Law, requiring obedience to its precepts, and penalty as a recompense for our transgressions. It regarded him as our representative, who was to fulfill its demands and satisfy its claims. It treated him as if he were a sinner; arraigned him before its bar, and condemned him to bear the penalty of its violation. Being made under the Law, he was made a curse for us. It is a part of the great plan of salvation, that the Son of God should suffer for our sakes, and fulfill the utmost demands of the Law.

Exposed to the rudeness of the young, and the caprice of the old, he endured all the evils of poverty, and the obloquy of his humble condition. On a level with the lowest of the human race, he was dependent

for the necessities of life — for food and raiment — for instruction and protection. Though Lord of all, he had not where to lay his head. He endured weariness, hunger, thirst, and all the sinless infirmities of the flesh. He was stricken, smitten and afflicted, persecuted, exiled, and literally a *man of sorrows*, and acquainted with grief. On him was poured the indignation of the rulers of the Jews, who were offended at his doctrine, and who assailed his reputation; calling him a glutton, a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners, and accusing him of being in league with Satan. Tempted of the Devil — heart-broken with reproach, and full of heaviness, he bore the enormous load of human guilt in the garden of Gethsemane, while he also, with entire resignation to his Father's will, prayed more earnestly that if it were possible, this cup might pass from him. Then he was seized by a band of soldiers, and dragged as a felon to the judgment-hall of Herod; accused of the foulest crimes, reviled, insulted, and treated as the vilest of the human race; led to Calvary, nailed to the cross, and there exhibited as a malefactor who had forfeited life by the foulest crimes.

“How great was his humiliation! The Lord of Life and Glory appeared like a common mortal, and was distinguished only by the intensity of his sufferings, and the state of complete dereliction in which he expired. The multitude looked on with un pitying

eyes ; heaven frowned in preternatural darkness, and all consolation was withheld from him." He humbled himself to the cursed death of the cross, and was laid in the tomb. This is the last degree of humiliation. All the glory of man is extinguished in the tomb ; but the Son of God, the Lord of Glory, lies in the silent grave, without any marks of distinction ! "The tongue which charmed thousands with its eloquence is mute, and the hand which controlled the powers of the visible and invisible world is unnerved. The shades of death have enveloped him, and silence reigns in his lonely abode."

"The humiliation of Christ manifests the greatness of his love, and the riches of his grace. It was for us, men, and for our salvation, that he assumed human nature, and abased himself to the dust of death. He drew a veil over his glory, that he might remove our reproach, and raise us to heavenly honors. He groaned and died, that we might obtain immortal felicity. He has acquired a title to our everlasting gratitude, by the most astonishing sacrifices."

Consider HIS ILLUSTRIOUS LIFE. It is distinguished for innocence, integrity and piety, industry, meekness, humility, and miracles, and works of mercy, and love to fallen man. It was the uniform testimony of all, that "he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." His Father said of him : "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." At the

cure of the deaf man, the Jews exclaimed : "He hath done all things well." The devils said : "We know who thou art ; the Holy One of God." Before the Sanhedrim, and Pontius Pilate, no art, nor cunning, nor malice, could prove him guilty of any crime. Pilate said : "I find no fault in him." Judas said : "I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood."

His resignation to the will of God was entire. His piety, and love to him, were supreme ; and, in the darkest hours of adversity, he saw with the far-reaching eye of faith, his Father's house, and borrowed thence to help his present want. At all times he gave God the glory of his mission, and doctrines, and miracles. He revered his word and ordinances, and was constant and fervent in his worship. In the exercise of filial duty, and the discharge of relative duties, his example was equally perfect and illustrious. He never courted public favor, nor feared public frowns ; was never allured by applause, nor awed by obloquy, but at all times reprov'd vice and commended virtue. During his entire personal ministry he imparted instruction adapted to all capacities, and proclaimed truth and duty to men of every creed and clime, so clearly, that the moral grandeur of his unwavering integrity excited the admiration of all, and brought from the officers of the chief priests and Pharisees this noble confession : "*Never man spake*

like this man." Amidst the greatest provocations, and the most unrelenting persecution, he made no resentment; but forgave wrongs, prayed for his enemies, and bestowed the blessings of grace and of glory. For those from whom he received nothing, and could receive nothing, he came into the world, and lived and died. The object of his mission was the most disinterested, benevolent, honorable, and glorious — even the glory of God, and the salvation of man. To accomplish this object, he was industrious beyond example; for he went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil. The uniform rule of his conduct was to do his Father's business. "My meat," says he, "is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish his work" — "I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work" — "The Son of Man came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many;" and accordingly he went throughout Judea, and Galilee, and Berea, and the adjacent country, scattering blessings with a bountiful hand — instructing, healing, comforting, and befriending all in his way.

In all this he was opposed by the government and nation — by the learned and unlearned — by enemies subtle, vigilant, persevering, base and malignant; yet he persevered and bore all with meekness, under the greatest opposition, persecution and abuse. When he

was reviled, he reviled not again ; when he suffered, he threatened not ; but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously. When his heart was full of anguish, no passion or resentment arose in his peaceful breast, to disturb the serenity of his soul. His actions were perverted — his motives impugned, and his character traduced and maligned ; yet he remained the same meek and lowly Jesus.

Notwithstanding all that is said of him by the prophets, and all the signs of heaven attending his mission, and the honors he received from men by the exercise of his power, in healing all manner of disease among the people, and controlling the winds and the waves — nature animate and inanimate — notwithstanding the exalted condition to which he rose from obscurity, and the wisdom he inherently possessed ; he remained humble, meek and lowly in heart, unexcited by vain glory, or inflated with pride. He freely conversed on all subjects of interest, and in disputes of the greatest importance, uniformly triumphed over his most cunning adversaries and put them to silence. He was declared to be a *prophet, mighty indeed*. His praise rung through the land ; multitudes spread their garments as he passed by, and cried “Hosannas to the Son of David ;” yet none of these things kindled a spark of pride in his breast. When the Jews sought to make him king, he retired into the desert alone. “When greeted with hosannas by the

enraptured multitude, he changed neither his demeanor nor his daily employments, but forgot the splendor of the applause, and himself, to weep over Jerusalem, and deplore the approaching ruin of the ungrateful city. He chose the humblest life; the humblest associates; the humblest food; the humblest dress and the humblest manners, and voluntarily yielded himself to the most humiliating death." He published peace and salvation; discharged all duties; did all things well, and left us a most perfect and illustrious example that we should follow his steps. The end for which he endured the Cross and all evils, was the best of all ends; the glory of God and the salvation of man. Not for himself; but for ruined and wretched man, he came into the world, lived, and labored, and died, and rose triumphant over death and the grave.

"His whole life was filled up with usefulness and duty — was laborious beyond example, and was wholly consecrated to the glory of God, and the good of mankind. In conformity to this great purpose, he spent all the former part of his life in an illustrious discharge of the duties of filial piety. In his public ministry, he taught with unceasing diligence the law of God — the ruin of man by his disobedience — and the tidings of his recovery by his own mediation. The way of life he marked out with an unerring hand. The means of life, he disclosed with a benevolent

voice. The duties to which man is summoned, he exemplified in his own perfect conduct. The hopes which man was invited to cherish, he portrayed in colors of light. The door of Heaven, shut before to this apostate world, he unbarred with his own power ; and Love invited laboring and heavy laden sinners to enter in and find rest. Wandering prodigals, perishing with want and wretchedness, and lost to the universe of God, he sought and found, and brought home to his Father's house, rejoicing. Wretches, dead in trespasses and sins, he raised to spiritual and eternal life.

“He was hated and persecuted day by day. Wickedness employed all its hostility against him — its pride and cunning — its malice and wrath ; calumniated his name ; invaded his peace and hunted his life. By his friends, he was betrayed and forsaken. By his enemies, he was accused of drunkenness and gluttony ; of impiety and blasphemy ; of being the friend of sinners and the coadjutor of Satan. From the agonies of Gethsemane, he was conveyed successively to the iniquitous tribunal of the Sanhedrim, to the bloody hall of Pilate, to the cross, and to the tomb. At the close of a life spent in bitterness and sorrow, he consummated all his sufferings by enduring that last and greatest of all evils, the wrath of God poured out upon him, as the substitute of sinners.”

In full view of all these things, “he came into this

world, to proclaim peace and salvation to those who despised, rejected and persecuted him; who nailed him to the cross, and compelled him to the grave. To those very men he announced all good — himself — his favor — his kingdom — his house — his presence — his everlasting joy.” With his own voice he proclaimed the things he has done, and the blessings he has procured at the price of his own blood. “There is now, he cries, glory to God in the highest, while there is peace on earth and good will toward men. In this ruined world, so long enveloped in darkness; so long deformed by sin; so long wasted by misery; where guilt, and sorrow, and suffering, have spread distress without control, and mourning without hope; where war and oppression have ravaged without, and remorse and despair consumed within; where Satan has exalted his throne above the stars of God, while its sottish millions have bent before him in religious worship; in this ruined world, where, since the apostasy, real good was never found, and where tidings of such good were never proclaimed; even here, I announce tidings of expiated sin — a pardoning God — a renewing Spirit — an opening Heaven, and a dawning immortality. Here, peace anew shall lift her olive branch over mankind. Here, salvation from sin and woe shall anew be found; and here, God shall dwell and reign, the God of Zion.” O, what a most illustrious life! How full of all good, benevolence, love and mercy to

fallen man! How worthy of our imitation! How exceedingly beyond finite description and conception! How precious and lovely is Jesus in his natures, names, offices, life and death!

“ *Jesus*, I love thy charming name,
’Tis music to my ear ;
Fain would I sound it out so loud,
That earth and heaven should hear,

Yes, thou art precious to my soul,
My transport and my trust ;
Jewels to thee are gaudy toys,
And gold is sordid dust.

All my capacious powers can wish,
In thee doth richly meet ;
Nor to mine eyes is light so dear,
Nor friendship half so sweet.

Thy grace still dwells upon my heart,
And sheds its fragrance there ;
The noblest balm of all its wounds,
The cordial of its care.

I’ll speak the honors of thy name
With my last laboring breath ;
Then, speechless, clasp thee in my arms,
The antidote of death.”

Behold HIS PECULIAR DEATH. It is distinguished from every other event of the same nature. It was long foretold by the prophets, and prefigured by the legal institutions and sacrifices. The whole system of worship under the Law proclaimed, that, without shedding

of blood, there is no remission. The ancient types were fulfilled in him, and his death was an atonement for sin. In dying, he offered a propitiatory sacrifice of sufficient merit to atone for the sins of all men. "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only; but also for the sins of the whole world."

1 Jn. ii: 2. His death was not the result of accident, disease, or decay of nature; but of *previous appointment*. God had promised that he should be for salvation unto the end of the earth. Is. xlix: 6. To this Caiaphas refers, when he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation, and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one, the children of God that were scattered abroad. Jn xi: 51, 52. After this most wonderful event in the history of the world had transpired, Peter said to the Jews, who had imbrued their hands in the blood of Christ: "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Act. ii: 23. Because they did it by wicked hands, or with an evil heart, they were guilty of the greatest crime — the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

Notwithstanding all this, his death was *voluntary*. Neither the rage of the Jews, nor the power of the Romans, nor all the created powers of the universe, could have torn him from his throne, nailed him to the cross, and accomplished this wondrous tragedy.

He had power to escape out of their hands, or cast them in a moment to the ground. He could pray to his Father, and he would send him more than twelve legions of angels to deliver him out of the hands of all his malicious foes; but this was *their hour*, and he came to do his Father's will, and *give his life a ransom for many* — “to give himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savor.”

Ep. v: 2. He could say what no creature could say of his life: “No man taketh it from me; but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.” Jn. x: 18. He gave his soul an offering for sin, and fulfilled all things that were written in the Law, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning him. In view of all his painful sufferings, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, and said: “I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished?” When it was accomplished, and he was made perfect through suffering, he cried with a loud voice, and said: “IT IS FINISHED!” and bowed his head and gave up the ghost.

He laid down his life for the sheep. His death was, therefore, *vicarious*. He died for our sins, not for his own. The Scriptures assert his perfect innocence when they say: “He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.” Even his enemies could not convince him of sin. The prince of this world com-

eth, says he, and hath nothing in me. After strict examination, Pilate said : " I find no fault in this man." The devils said : " We know who thou art ; the Holy One of God." Judas, who was with him in public and in private, and had every opportunity to detect anything wrong, confessed : " I have sinned in that I have betrayed the *innocent* blood." Hence he died, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, who laid on him the iniquity of us all.

His death was *efficacious*. The blood of legal sacrifices could not take away sin ; but Jesus appeared once in the end of the world to put away sin by the *sacrifice of himself*. The design of his death was to satisfy divine justice, make atonement for sin, and redeem us to God by his own " blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." It was necessary that the Captain of our salvation should be made perfect through sufferings. How astonishing is his death ! It presents the strongest motives to mortify sin, and devote ourselves to God. It demands our supreme love and gratitude ; for herein God's love is manifested, and the love of Christ displayed in the most convincing and wonderful manner. Here is love without beginning, without a parallel, without change, and without end — love stronger than death — love which passes knowledge — love, all height above, all depth below — love broad as the world, and long as eternity.

His death, ignominious and painful in the extreme, is the most astonishing event in the history of the world. Who can comprehend the full import of that language, "It pleased the Lord to bruise him;" "He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all;" even to the cup of wrath due for sin, and all the torture which rage and malice could contrive, and inflict on him as our substitute? From his humble birth, he was an exile from his country, despised of men and rejected by the people; reproached as a Galilean, a perverter of the nation, a wine-bibber, a gluttonous man, a friend of publicans and sinners, and a deceiver and blasphemer in league with Satan. Follow him to the garden of Gethsemane, where, in agony, he prayed more earnestly, while the disciples were fast asleep on that sacred ground. It was night. The noise of tumultuous life had ceased, and nature was at rest, while the stars poured down their splendor, and the gentle breezes blew softly along. Jerusalem slumbered in security, disturbed only by the watchman's step, and the murmuring of Kedron passing by. All was tranquil, when lo! torches were seen advancing in the distance, and the onward march of soldiery soon broke the sweet repose. Their helmets and shields glittered in the blazing light of their torches. They advanced, guided by the infamous traitor; and, in a moment, Jesus was surrounded, betrayed, seized and taken as a prisoner, from the garden through the streets

of Jerusalem, to the house of the high priest. The chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him. Herod with his men of war set him at naught, mocked him, arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate, who, after examination, found no fault in him, and resolved to chastise him and release him ; but this only added fuel to the flame of passion already kindled, and they cried out all at once, " Away with him, crucify him, crucify him ! " Pilate said unto them the third time, " Why, what evil hath he done ? I have found no cause of death in him, I will therefore chastise him and let him go ; " but they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified, and the voices of them, and the chief priests prevailed. Then the blessed Jesus was delivered up to the base, and infuriated multitude, who wreaked on him all their infernal rage, and began to spit in his face, and smite him with the palms of their hands and with reeds ; to buffet him, to cover his face, and in derision cry, " Prophecy unto us, who is he that smote thee." They put a crown of thorns on his head, and led him away to be crucified.

The tumult now rose to its height, and although neither Pilate, nor the prince of this world, found any fault in him, yet the raging multitude, without feeling and without a conscience, cried out, " Away with him, *crucify him, crucify him* ; his blood be on us and on our children ! " A thousand voices on every side

uttered, in wild confusion, this fearful language ; and Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required. Dreadful sentence ! Amid these cruel enemies and the carnal security of that city, over which he wept, the Saviour passed, bearing his cross till nature failed, when Simon, a Cyrenian, was compelled to bear the cross to the place of execution. To his friends following after, and mingling their lamentations with the shouts of the mob, he exclaimed in pathetic tones, “ Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.” At length, they reach the top of Calvary, nail Jesus to the cross, and cry, He saved others, himself he cannot save ; come down from the cross, if thou be the Son of God ! But what were these revilings, what the cross, the thorny crown, the spitting, and smiting, and scourging, and mocking of his foes, and buffeting of Satan, and desertion of his friends and all else, to the desertion of his Father, and the cup which he gave him to drink ? It was this that made the waters come into his soul, now exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, melted like wax in the midst of his bowels, and his bones all out of joint. What he suffered in his soul, must ever surpass all powers of description and conception. Here is the highest pitch of suffering. Every variety of agony, excessive sorrow, unutterable load of dejection, inexpressible wonder, alarm and anguish at the curse of

the law, and the load of wrath due for sin, met in his soul.

The period of his mysterious agony, awful desertion and actual death, is called *his hour*—the hour and power of darkness—the hour that he was to go out of the world, make atonement for sin and bring in everlasting righteousness. During this period, every aid, human and divine, withdrew itself. “He trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him”—none of all he healed came to his relief in his last extremity, and his Father hid his face. Here the tide of suffering rose to its height; here everything painful, ignominious, distressing, terrific and overwhelming, met in him.

Here is a scene, whether to the sufferer or to the guilty world, is the most awful and momentous that ever occurred—a scene which excites mingled emotions of joy and sorrow; the sympathies of his people; the envy of devils, and the admiration of saints and angels—a scene at which all nature was moved. But it was his desertion, as he stood alone in the darkened universe, that brought from him that amazing and touching cry which should melt the hardest heart: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” He said, IT IS FINISHED, and bowed his head and gave up the ghost. At the sound of that cry, falling from his lips on the astonished multitude, the veil of the

temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom. The sun darkened in the heavens ; the earth groaned as if about to expire ; “ an earthquake thundered on ; ” and the dead rose from their long slumbers, and came forth to witness the awful scene. Darkness covered all the land, from the sixth to the ninth hour, and the Centurian, and they that were with him, feared greatly, saying : “ Truly this was the Son of God.” Most terrible scene, fit to melt the heart of stone, and fill the universe with alarm ; and astonishing to tell, no intercessor interposed for the Saviour’s relief, and no “ thunderbolt fell from Heaven ” to destroy his murderers. At such a scene well might the heart melt and bleed at every pore ; well might nature mourn ; angels weep, and silence prevail in Heaven.

“ The sun beheld it ! No, the shocking scene
Drove back his chariot, midnight veiled his face.
Sun ! didst thou fly thy Maker’s pain ! or start
At that enormous load of human guilt
Which bowed his blessed head, o’erwhelmed his Cross,
Made groan the centre, burst earth’s marble womb
With pangs, strange pangs ! delivered of her dead !
Hell howled, and Heaven that hour let fall a tear ;
Heaven wept that man might smile ; Heaven bled that man
Might never die.”

Communion with God is the life of his soul, and the cry of desertion intimated that the joy and happiness of his soul were departing, and that his whole nature was tossed amid the billows of immitigated

woe. The tokens of God's comforting presence were suspended. "The Godhead seemed to retire and sleep while his humanity suffered." He felt in his soul that he was separated from the fountain of all blessedness, and the pains of hell got hold on him, enduring the wrath of God due for sin, of which this desertion was a part.

This amazing scene displayed at once the evil of sin, the justice of God, the love of Christ, the value of the soul, and the triumphs of the Saviour. To give value and dignity to the whole scene, his sufferings were by *appointment*—*were voluntary, vicarious, and efficacious*. But the appalling scene is past, and the work of redemption finished. Rage has done its utmost. The raging multitude, that came with insults and mockery, returned home, smiting their breasts. The darkened heavens laid aside their habiliments of mourning, and cast down their golden rays, while the gentle zephyrs blew softly over the face of weeping nature. In dying, Jesus conquered, triumphing over death and the grave; over principalities and powers, making a show of them openly, triumphing over them in his Cross. He hurled Satan from his throne, and cast him like lightning from heaven; and, by the consoling words addressed to the penitent thief, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise," gave his people a sure pledge of glory and immortality beyond the grave. The ensigns of mock royalty, put into his hands, were

converted into the instruments of his absolute power and universal dominion. The cross, from which his blood flowed as from a high altar, to cleanse from all sin, and which his foes thought would stigmatize his followers with reproach, became their royal standard, around which they would rally with joy, and their banner that would wave in triumph over the world. At the foot of the cross, the Gentiles waited for his Law; and the rod of his power went forth from Jerusalem, bringing joy and gladness, and proclaiming to the ends of the earth, that “men shall be blessed in him, and *all nations shall call him blessed.*” Such were the events and triumph of that hour in which Jesus, with a soul full of trouble, suffered, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. He saw them in their incipient state—saw of the travail of his soul, and was satisfied. Now, with joy, he said, “IT IS FINISHED!” As a conqueror he retired from the field, reviewing his conquests, and is henceforth hailed as the glorious King of men and angels.

In what grateful remembrance should his death be held by us! In every age, and land of civilization, statues have been made, pillars raised, and monuments erected, to the memory of historians, statesmen, philosophers and poets. Days have been set apart, and festivals commemorated, in honor of their names. But how few deserve the title of benefactor? What tribute of respect is due to their memory? All they have

done and suffered, bears no comparison to what Christ has done and suffered for us. "All the writings of philosophers, poets and orators, are infinitely inferior in wisdom and efficacy to the single sermon of Christ on the Mount. A great part of the efforts of statesmen, heroes and patriots, have been nuisances to the world, and merely means of raising them to distinction and applause. The best of these efforts have been mingled with much folly and sin, and have terminated only in little and temporary good. In all that Christ said, supreme wisdom shone ; in all that he did and suffered, supreme excellence. His efforts have accomplished the salvation of the world, and produced boundless good to unnumbered millions of rational beings. Disinterestedness, immensely glorious, illumined his whole life, and encircled him on the cross with intense and eternal splendor. Nothing so beautiful, so lovely, was ever before seen by the universe, or will be hereafter." Hence, an ordinance is appointed to commemorate his death to the end of time. It became the theme of the apostles' preaching, and it will be the song of the redeemed in glory : "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

"Worthy the Lamb for sinners slain,
Cry the redeemed above,
Blessing and honor to obtain,
And everlasting love.

Worthy the Lamb on earth, we sing,
Who died our souls to save :
Henceforth, O death ! where is thy sting ?
Thy victory, O grave ?

Worthy forever is the Lamb,
That took our sins away :
But Oh ! what tribute can we give,
What equal honors pay ?

Reign, mighty Prince, forever reign,
Till death himself be dead ;
And let eternal ages shower
Their blessings on thy head.

Thus will we sing till nature fail,
Till sense and language die ;
And then resume the joyful theme
In happier worlds on high."

Behold HIS SIGNAL TRIUMPH. Never was such a triumph before achieved, and never will there be any such hereafter. He rose triumphant over death and the grave, and all the banded legions of earth and hell removed the ignominy of the cross ; revived the hopes of his sorrowing disciples ; laid the foundation of faith, and hope, and joy ; gave evidence that he had finished the work of redemption, and assured believers that they will finally triumph over death and the grave. He rose from the grave as their *representative*, and they shall rise from the tomb through his merits and by his almighty power : for "since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus

Christ, who according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." 1 Pt. i: 3.

It is a reward for his sufferings. It behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day. For the sufferings of death, "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." Then his glory which had been veiled, and was to follow his sufferings, commenced. He ascended in human nature, which is glorified in *the person of Immanuel*. He ascended from the mount of Olives near Bethany and Gethsemane, where he endured the greatest abasement, suffering and sorrow. He went up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet. He led captivity captive, and received gifts for men. Leading captivity captive, signifies triumph over the powers of darkness, and the final overthrow of their kingdom. He ascended up into the Heaven of heavens, where God dwells, and where the redeemed will dwell and reign with him in glory. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into Heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." He. ix: 24. As God, he fills all things—fills Heaven with his glory, and earth with the blessings of his grace; but before his Father's throne, he pleads the merits of his death, and obtains for us the infinite blessings which it procures. When he had purged our sins, he sat down on the

right hand of the Majesty on high. This signifies the highest dignity and honor, and is an evidence of his divine origin and glory. It is also an emblem of power, as David says, "The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool," and as Daniel declares, "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of Man, came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him, and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him." Da. vii: 13, 14.

In our nature and in the character of Mediator, he is honored as a priest upon his throne, at the right hand of God, who has thus exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name, "that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Ph. ii: 11.

This two-fold triumph of his resurrection and ascension was necessary, to vindicate his character from the aspersions of his foes. It behooved him to rise from the dead. Thus, he was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness by the *resurrection* from the dead." Ro. i: 4. Notwithstanding all the precaution of his enemies to prevent his resurrection, by "sealing the stone, and setting a watch," he rose the third day, as the glorious conqueror over death and the grave.

His resurrection is a fundamental doctrine of our religion ; for if Christ be not risen, we are of all men the most miserable : but it is recorded by the Evangelists, and generally acknowledged by all men. “ Behold, there was a great earthquake ; for the angel of the Lord descended from Heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow ; and for fear of him, the keepers did shake, and became as dead men ; and the angel answered, and said unto the women, Fear not ye ; for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here, for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.” *Mat. xxviii: 2-6.* Without the prospect of any worldly honor or gain, and in the face of all opposition, trial, reproach, pain, and death, the apostles testified that he rose from the dead, and ascended up into heaven. For, say they, “ We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.” *Ac. iv: 20.* And the angels announced to them, “ Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven ? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come, in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” *Ac. i: 11.* He gave them the clearest evidence of his resurrection. He showed himself to them, not once only, but often ; not to one alone, but to many ; and at one time to more than five hundred persons, who conversed with him, touched him, and

did eat and drink with him. He showed them his hands and his feet, which bore the print of the nails. He confirmed his resurrection by many infallible proofs being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. He poured out the Spirit according to his promise, and from that time to the present he has confirmed it by the success of the Gospel in effecting a great revolution in the affairs of the world, and in establishing a religion which is diverse from all previous systems of worship. He endowed the apostles with supernatural gifts, even with power to work miracles in his name. "We are his witnesses," say they, "of these things, and so also is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him." Ac. v: 32.

For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down on the right hand of God the Father, where he is honored and cheered with his Father's smiles as an evidence of having finished the work of redemption. His joy is in proportion to his former humiliation, suffering and sorrow, and his reward is according to his merits. "The King shall joy in thy strength, O Lord, and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice! Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips. *Selah.* For thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness: thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head. He asked life of

thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days forever and ever. His glory is great in thy salvation : honor and majesty hast thou laid upon him, for thou hast made him most blessed forever : thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance." Ps. xxi. Yea, he rejoices to know that Heaven will soon be filled with a multitude which no man can number, to praise him as the Author of our salvation. His triumph is a source of joy to his people, and the security of the Church depends on the exercise of that power with which he was then invested. To him we owe prompt and perfect obedience, profound reverence, and everlasting praise ; for he blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, took it away, nailed it to his cross, spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in himself. He has triumphed gloriously over all, retired from the field, and reviewed his conquests. Thanks be unto God, who always causes us to triumph in Christ ; and everlasting thanks be unto our triumphant Redeemer !

“ Hail, Thou ! that on this glorious morn didst burst
The bands of death ! All hail, incarnate Lord !
First-born of Heaven, what time the barren grave
With wondrous throes gave forth thy present flesh,
In all its incorruptible array
Of majesty and light. *Triumphant Lord,*
Who in thy rising power didst captive lead
Captivity, and at thy chariot wheels

The vanquished hosts of hell didst with thee bring!
Hail, conquering King! Almighty Prince of Life!
First-fruits of those that sleep, in hope assured
Of that bright morning, when the trumpet's sound
Shall wake the slumbering dead, when from the tomb
Thy quickened saints shall spring to swell thy strain,
Clad in immortal bloom. Thy angel bands
Attend thee up the skies with cheerful notes;
We, too, responsive cry, 'Our God is gone,
Is upward gone!'"

Behold HIS FINAL GLORY. When he had finished the work of redemption, he said: "Father, I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do, and now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine ownself, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." *Jn. xvii: 4, 5.* His final glory is the same in nature as his original glory. It was never laid aside, but was veiled in humanity, as the sun is veiled by a cloud or an eclipse. As the sun is the same when under a cloud, so was the glory of Christ the same when under the veil of human nature. Only a faint view of it is obtained in this world, where we see through a glass darkly. It was represented by the tabernacle and temple—the holy place, the oracle, and ark, and cherubim—by the mercy-seat—by the robes and utensils of the high priest—by the sacrifices and sprinkling of blood in the most holy place—and by the whole system of worship under

the Law, which was a *shadow of good things to come* ; but the *body is of Christ*.

There were manifestations of this glory in various ages of the world. Abraham saw it ; and Moses saw it when he said of the burning bush : “I will turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.” The bush was an emblem of the Church, and of her divine Head, and of their sufferings. The good will of Him who dwelt in the bush has preserved the Church amidst all her flames, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her. Joshua saw this glory ; Isaiah saw it, when he saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high, and lifted up, and his train filled the temple, and one cried to another, and said : “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts ; the whole earth is full of his glory.” In vision, all the prophets saw it when his Spirit in them testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the *glory* that should follow. It was seen at his birth, and at his baptism, when there came a voice from Heaven, saying : “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” The disciples saw it on the Mount of Transfiguration. Paul saw it on his way to Damascus, when he saw a light at mid-day above the brightness of the sun. John saw it on the Isle of Patmos, and fell as dead at his feet. It was seen by all his saints, when the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory

as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. It was seen in his works of grace and mercy, in forgiving sin, bestowing the Holy Spirit, and grace, and eternal life.

He is the Father's representative ; the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person. He is the representation of the Father's glory ; of his nature, and his will to man. God in his essential and absolute character is never seen by the human eye in this world, nor in the world to come. He dwells in "light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see." 1 Tim. vi : 16. All representations of the divine glory, that ever have been, or ever will be made, are made through Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge ; in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. No man hath known the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. When Moses prayed to see God's glory, he put him in a cleft of a rock, while his glory passed by, and he saw his back parts and not his face ; for no man shall see him and live. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God is seen in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Cor. iv : 6. His face is the only mirror, which reflects the glory of the Father, either in the Church below, or in the Temple above. He is in the Father, and the Father in him. It was not his external, but his divine glory which men saw on earth ; for his face was marred more than any

man, and his form more than the sons of men. When we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him—no external beauty. But his divine beauty renders him fairer than the children of men—altogether lovely. He reflects the glory of the Father in the works of creation, providence and redemption; “to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.” “Unto him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages.” Ep. iii: 9-21.

In him we see not only the wisdom; but also the love of God. Herein is love, not that we loved God; but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Yea, the glory of all the divine perfections is manifested in Christ. Here we see by faith the King in his beauty, and the land that is very far off—see the glory of Christ, in the preaching of the Gospel; in his miracles, and works of mercy and love; in his life, and death, and resurrection, and ascension to his throne on high. There, as a reward for his sufferings, in obtaining eternal redemption for us, he is crowned with glory. “Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?” For the sufferings of death God hath highly exalted him.

Before his departure from this world, he prayed, Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given

me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory. This glory was veiled in the form of a servant, but now the veil is removed, and he is declared to be the Son of God, with power by the resurrection from the dead, and he shines in Heaven with infinite lustre and glory. Human nature is itself exalted and glorified in his person, being filled with all the divine graces and perfections, of which it is capable. Believers will be fashioned like unto his *glorious body*. “We shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” “We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” “Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face: now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known.” 1 Co. xiii: 12. This is the glory of Jesus, the Author of our salvation, whom they slew and hanged on a tree — but now crowned with honor, and power, and glory. Now his glory is seen in obscurity — through a glass darkly — but it will shine in all its divine effulgence, when he will come in the glory of his Father, and with the holy angels.

To be with him, and behold his glory, is the sum of human bliss. It was the sum of all his prayers in behalf of his people, that they *might be with him and behold his glory*. Oh, may we ever behold this glory, which will eclipse all the splendor and fading beau-

ties of this world ; mortify our sins, banish our fears, and give rest and peace to our souls ! May the Spirit of the Lord shine in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the *face of Jesus Christ* ! Ever-blessed and adored Saviour ! may we behold thee, for ourselves, in all thy divine excellence and unrivaled glory ! Oh, remove the veil from our hearts, and fill us with all the fruits and graces of thy Spirit ! Show us thy glory, in which thou wilt forever reign at thy Father's right hand, amidst angels and the spirits of just men made perfect, ascribing *honor, and glory, and power unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb* ! Then shall our hearts burn with love to thee, and we shall eternally sing thy praise —

“ In that thrice happy world, where gilded toys

No more disturb our thoughts — no more pollute our joys.”

Oh, what sweetness is in the Song of the Redeemed — what melody, sublimity, rapture, glory and triumph in the mingling notes of men and angels ! Jesus is in their eye and in their hearts — in their soul and in their song. The brightest displays of his glory, and the sweetest manifestations of his love, will be the inexhaustible theme of their sublime and enchanting song. Oh, that we may enter into the joy of our Lord, and behold his glory, and eternally swell the chorus of his praise ! May we

“ Behold the glories of the Lamb
Amidst his Father’s throne ;
Prepare new honors for his name,
And songs before unknown.

Let elders worship at his feet,
The Church adore around,
With vials full of odors sweet,
And harps of sweetest sound.

Now to the Lamb that once was slain,
Be endless blessings paid ;
Salvation, *glory*, joy remain
Forever on thy head.

Thou hast redeemed our souls with blood,
Hast set the prisoners free ;
Hast made us kings and priests to God,
And we shall reign with thee.”

XIII.

SALVATION URGED.

KNOWING, *therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.* The vast importance of salvation is sufficient to commend it to every man's conscience, and bring it home to his heart with irresistible power. All that has already been said on this subject—from its infinite importance, down to its supreme joy, and divine Author—might be used as arguments for this purpose. But in addition to this :

SALVATION IS URGED FROM THE VALUE OF THE SOUL.

The soul is a spiritual and immortal principle, which thinks, and wills, and acts, and connects man with his Creator, and with angels around his throne. The body is of the dust, and shall return to dust again ; but the soul shall return to God, who gave it. It will eternally enjoy his smiles, or live forever under his frowns. Hence its value is infinite—its loss is immense ! This is implied in the inquiry : “ What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ? ” It also appears from the *nature* and *capacities* of the soul, which is the seat of intelligence, and takes pleasure in exploring the field of natural, intellectual and moral science. How great

are its capacities and desires ! It recalls the past, contemplates the present, and anticipates the future. It soars above this lower world, and measures the magnitude, and distances, and revolutions of the planetary system. It contemplates the works of Nature, of Providence, and of Grace, and ardently desires a full knowledge of Him who only can satisfy its vast desires. It knows, and blesses, and praises God ; receives a revelation of his will, and holds communion with him in his ordinances. It is sanctified here, and glorified in another world, where it holds fellowship with holy angels, and enjoys God within the veil.

In this life our knowledge is partial, uncertain and limited, and yet it contributes much to our happiness. Even in this world, there is a vast difference between the learned and unlearned — between one whose mind weighs all things in the balance of truth, and one who every moment needs a guide to direct him between vice and virtue, happiness and misery. Even in this life, a man, separated from the bliss of society, and shut up in his study, enjoys a pleasure more satisfactory and refined than all which can be derived from scenes of grandeur and places of diversion. But what shall we enjoy when, in Heaven, God will unfold to our minds the boundless extent of truth and knowledge — knowledge of his nature and perfections, and of his purposes of grace and mercy to man ; and of our personal interest in these things ? Can the world,

with all it contains, compensate for the loss of such felicity?

The soul is also the *seat of holiness*, without which there is no true happiness. The most holy beings are the most happy; and the most unholy are the most miserable: yet in this life human misery is often relieved by the hope of its speedy termination, by friends, by the exercise of reason, and by religion. "Religion gives even affliction a grace, and reconciles man to his lot." This mixture of pleasure and of pain may give some idea of the value of the soul, capable of enduring so much happiness or misery. What will be that happiness or misery in a world where there is no mixture, no mitigation, no end!

The *soul is immortal* in its nature, continually bent on enjoyment, and capable of endless duration. It is not satisfied with a finite number of years, even amidst continual scenes of grandeur. Its desires transcend all fixed periods, all created objects, and can be satisfied only by Him who is *all and in all*. These immortal desires teach what we are, whence we came, and for what our Creator has designed us. Though the soul is now confined in the body, surrounded by other objects, yet its Creator does not design to involve it in the dissolution of the material world, nor deprive it of that immortality which constitutes the dignity and superiority of man.

Death ends the most specious titles on earth, the

most dazzling grandeur, and the most lofty aspirations of the human mind. A winding-sheet is all that remains for the most charming beauty, the most refined scholar, or the most exalted monarch. In the grave is an end of all human greatness, wordly wealth, and sensual pleasure ; yea, all those things for which men often give their souls in exchange. But what are all perishable things in comparison with the welfare of the immortal soul ? Oh, what are they ? The soul survives the body, and lives and acts in a state of separation from it. The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat ; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up ; the stars of heaven shall fall as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs when she is shaken of a mighty wind ; the moon shall become as blood, and the sun black as sackcloth of hair : but the soul never dies.

“ The soul, of origin divine,
God’s glorious image freed from clay,
In Heaven’s eternal sphere shall shine

A star of day.

The sun is but a spark of fire,
A transient meteor in the sky ;
The soul, immortal as its Sire,
Shall never die.”

An *immense price* was paid for the soul’s redemption. A price more precious than rubies — than the

gold of Ophir — than the world and its fullness. Man knows not the price thereof, neither is it found in the land of the living. It is the price of blood — of blood Divine. When no created arm could save, God's eye pitied, and his arm brought salvation. He found a ransom. He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. Christ Jesus purchased the Church with his *own blood* — by it he entered into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. "Ye are redeemed, not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish." The Song of the Redeemed is: "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, to him be glory, and honor, and dominion, forever and ever" — "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Jesus died for our sins, and rose again for our justification. He gave his life a ransom for the soul.

"The ransom was paid down, the fund of Heaven,
Heaven's inexhaustible, exhausted fund,
Amazing and amazed, poured forth the price
All price beyond! Though curious to compute,
Archangels failed to cast the mighty sum.
Its value vast, ungrasped by minds create,
Forever hides and glows in the Supreme."

Go, learn the value of the soul, from this ransom, in the dignity of Him who died for its redemption ! Learn it from the types, and shadows, and prophecies which foretold his advent and sufferings. Learn it from the hill of Calvary, crimsoned with blood Divine. Learn it in the accusations of the chief priests, and scribes, and Pharisees, and false witnesses—in the shame, and spitting, and smiting, and mockery of his foes—in the insatiable demands of avarice, bigotry and prejudice—in the rage of implacable enemies—in the cruelty of the Roman soldiery—in the vengeance of the broken and inexorable law—in the buffetings of Satan, and in the cup of wrath due for sin—in the agony of the garden of Gethsemane, baptized with his bloody sweat—in the cry of the infuriated mob, “Crucify him, crucify him !”—in the bloody spear, and crown of thorns—in the nails that pierced his hands and feet—in the desertion of his friends, and the hidings of his Father’s face—in the sufferings of his soul amid the agonies of death, and the terrible signs of nature’s pangs. It is of more value than all worlds.

“ Know’st thou the value of a soul immortal ?

Behold this midnight glory ; worlds on worlds !

Amazing pomp ! Redouble this amaze ;

Ten thousand add ; add twice ten thousand more ;

Then weigh the whole ; one soul outweighs them all ! ”

Hence the *contest* which is carried on about the soul. The powers of earth, heaven and hell are contending for this prize. On one side are Satan and all his allies, constituting a cunning, malicious and powerful enemy. Their name is *legion*, for they are many. At their head is the Prince of the Power of the Air, who goes about seeking whom he may devour. Long have they been in the field. From age to age, all guile and hypocrisy are used by them ; every allurement is presented, and every artifice is employed to destroy the soul.

On the other hand, Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, is engaged, with all the armies of Heaven, to save the soul. He makes the clouds his chariot — his ministers a flame of fire — the stars of heaven, and the dust of the earth, instruments to do his pleasure in saving sinners. He sends his Word, and his Spirit, and angels, to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation. He sends his prophets, rising early and sending them. He prays for them that their faith may not fail, nor Satan sift them as wheat. He takes them as the prey from the mighty, keeps them as the apple of his eye, and by his power through faith unto salvation. He subdues those lusts which war against the soul ; extracts the sting of death, and finally makes them more than conquerors. On his part, nothing is left undone to save the soul.

“ What more could most abundant mercy do ?
Have I not risen, and sent my seers,
Prophets, apostles, teachers, ministers,
With signs and wonders, working in my name ?
Did I not send Immanuel forth, my Son,
Only begotten, to purchase by his blood
As many as believed upon his name ? ”

Never would such a contest be carried on about the soul, and never would such a price have been paid for its redemption, were it not of *infinite* value. How great is that price ! All things in the universe fade before the scenes of the Cross. Never would the infidel fear to die, were not the soul capable of endless happiness or misery. More than once, Voltaire said : “ I hate life, and yet I am afraid to die.” How great is the loss of the soul ! It includes the loss of all spiritual blessings — the world, with all its fullness, riches, honors, empires, and dominion — Heaven, with all its glory and felicity. It also includes great torment of soul and body — torments contrived and inflicted by an offended and insulted God. Loss and punishment will be inflicted at once. These evils will be sudden, irresistible and eternal. O, consider this, ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver ! O, the thought of a lost soul ! Where shall we find tears fit to be wept at such a thought ! Where can be found pity and compassion equal to such a calamity ! Not all yon bright

worlds destroyed at once, were half so sad, as one immortal soul which grasps for happiness, and meets despair.

Learn the value of the soul from its capacities ; its immortality ; the price of its redemption, and the contest about it. Learn it from the death-bed scenes of the infidel, and of the believer ; and learn it from the torments of those that are beyond hope. Oh, may we learn to prize our souls more than ten thousand worlds ! Blessed Saviour, who died for our redemption, make our bodies the temple of the Holy Ghost ; renew us by thy Spirit ; impart thy grace ; and, for thy name's sake, save our souls with an everlasting salvation !

SALVATION IS URGED BY THE SCENES OF DEATH AND JUDGMENT. Death is an irresistible evil, which destroys the union of soul and body. It destroys the dearest earthly ties, and ushers us into the unseen and untried world, where our state of happiness, or of misery, is eternally fixed. It is certain in its approach, universal in extent, dreadful in its ravages, and eternal in its consequences. It is the wages of sin ; and there is no discharge in this warfare. Wealth, nobility, talents, learning, piety, and swaddled innocence, have no power over its strong arm. No art, nor any created power, can retain the spirit in the day of death. That day, man's breath departs, his thoughts perish. He lies down, and rises not till the heavens be no more.

“Desire shall fail, because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets.”

“Strong as death, which subdues all,” and “cruel as the grave, which spares none,” are common proverbs. “Pale death knocks at the cottages of the poor, and the palaces of kings, with an impartial foot.” Then circulation, and all the vital functions, cease operation; the pulse beats no more; the light of the eye is extinguished; the body becomes insensible and inactive; is laid in the grave, and in process of time putrefies, and returns to dust. Man, who is compared to grass, and to the flower of the field, *is cut off with pining sickness, from day to day, and swept away like the chaff of the summer threshing floor.*

In ordinary cases, death is the result of various causes, which affect and impair the system, destroy its texture, and reduce it to its original elements. It is impaired by heat and cold, and vapors arising from the earth. It is worn out by toil and labor necessary to procure a subsistence. It is destroyed by famine, and pestilence, and various diseases which assail us by day and by night. By anxiety, fear, disappointment, regret, remorse, and anticipations of a future reckoning, it is brought down to the grave. All these things operate under the direction of Him who has *fixed the bounds of our habitation that we cannot pass.* Man is dying from his birth, and by the stroke of the Almighty is turned to destruction. He cometh forth like a

flower, and continueth not. God changes his countenance, and sends him away to “the land of darkness and the shadow of death : a land of darkness, as darkness itself ; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness.” Job, x: 22.

Many are cut off as soon as they see the light. At best, life is always uncertain, and attended with pain, debility and decay ; and death—grim, painful and inevitable death—is the loss of all that is desirable on earth. How dreadful is the thought of leaving all below, and entering the world of spirits ! The very thought alarms and moves the hardest heart. “To be arrested in the midst of our career—to be separated from those whom we love—to close our eyes for the last time upon the light of the sun—to give up our joys and hopes with our parting sigh,” is an evil of no small magnitude. If natural death be such an evil, what must it be when the soul leaves the body under the curse of Jehovah, and dwells forever under his frown ! Unless sunk in ignorance, or hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, the summons of death must be shocking to him who has neglected salvation.

“ In that dread moment, how the frantic soul
Raves round the walls of her clay-tenement ;
Runs to each advance, and shrieks for help ;
But shrieks in vain ! How wishfully she looks
On all she’s leaving, now no longer hers !
A little longer, yet a little longer,

O! might she stay to wash away her crimes,
And fit her for her passage! Mournful sight!
Her very eyes weep blood; and every groan
She heaves is big with horror; but the foe,
Like a stanch murderer, steady to his purpose,
Pursues her close through every lane of life,
Nor misses once the track; but presses on,
Till forc'd, at last, to the tremendous verge,
At once she sinks —”

Death terminates all the enjoyments of the wicked, and begins his eternal woe. “Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things; but now thou art tormented.” It terminates all opportunity of preparing for the world to come. There is “no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave.” “The night cometh, when no man can work.” How different is its result to the believer! It terminates all his pains and sorrows, and begins his eternal joy. Now he is comforted; all his tears are dried up. When he leaves this world, he bids a final adieu to the sins and sorrows of mortal life. The morn of unclouded day rises on him, bright, and glorious, and eternal. His sufferings are exchanged for songs — his humble cottage for mansions of bliss — his rags for robes of glory. His cruel mockings, bonds and imprisonments are all over and gone; he is crowned with an eternal weight of glory, and strikes his golden harp in songs of everlasting joy.

The time of death is appointed in wisdom. It pre-

vents the wicked from treasuring up a greater amount of wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. Life is sufficiently long to prepare for eternity. Then how important is it to obtain an interest in the Redeemer *now*? How dreadful, beyond conception, would our future existence be, were it a state of *unceasing death* of soul and body! How dreadful to dwell with devouring fire — with everlasting burnings! As life is uncertain, it may soon end. Perhaps your sun may go down ere it is noon. Oh! presume not on *to-morrow*; but awake from your slumbers before there is written on your eternal existence, *lamentation, mourning and woe*! Seize the present precious time to prepare for eternity.

The portion of the wicked is terminated by the grave. His life is short and uncertain, mixed with pain and disappointment. He is often cut off in the midst of his days — suddenly in a moment. He is consumed with terrors, and his wealth left to others. He can neither look back with pleasure on anything he has done, nor forward with hope to any remaining comfort. Oh! secure your salvation *now*, that when you die, the long night of storm and tempest may retire, and the calm and cheerful morn of perpetual day may rise on your soul — the promises soothe your mind, and inspire you with hope — and the Sun of Righteousness enlighten your passage through the valley of the shadow of death!

You cannot escape this solemn scene ; for death is the common lot of all men. It arrests mankind at every period and station of life, and extends through all time and to all things.

“ Death ! great proprietor of all ! ’tis thine
To tread out empire, and to quench the stars.
The sun himself by thy permission shines,
And one day thou shalt pluck him from his sphere.”

It levels all distinctions in the human family. Here lie the hero, the prince, and the peasant. Here the rich and the poor meet together ; the servant is free from his master ; the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. “ Here wisdom and folly, learning and ignorance, refinement and vulgarity,” beauty and deformity, lie down together, and the clods of the valley cover them. The pride of beauty, and talents, and wealth, and honor, and office, and reputation, and power, is laid low in the tomb. Here, “ the form that once gave pleasure to all around it, now creates only pain and sorrow.” To the beauty, conscious of her superior charms, how humbling is the thought, that the form which she has so often surveyed with rapture, must soon “ be chilled by the icy hand of death ; the roses fade from her cheeks, the splendor vanish from her eyes, and all her elegant form be dissolved in dust !” How humbling, to adopt the language of Job : “ I have said to corruption, Thou art

my father ; to the worm, Thou art my mother and my sister !” How vain is beauty without the garment of salvation ! How foolish to spend so much time at the toilet, and so little at the throne of grace ! How sinful to spend so much time and money to pamper and adorn the body, and neglect the soul ! Must the North, South, East and West pour forth their treasures of luxury, of gold, and gems, and silks, and furs, to pamper and adorn the body, which must so soon be wrapt in a shroud and laid in the grave ! There, over whom do we walk ? Over “the mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient ; the captain of fifty, and the honorable man, and the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator.” What are they now ? and what will all the living soon be ? This mournful epitaph may be written on all :

“ How lov’d, how valu’d once, avails thee not ;
To whom related, or by whom begot ;
A heap of dust alone remains of thee ;
’Tis all thou art ! and all the proud shall be.”

The ravages of death are dreadful. Saul and Jonathan fell together on Mount Gilboa. David and Absalom, Job and his children, Lazarus and his sisters, the widow and her only son, are separated by its strong arm. Armies, towns and cities, are often buried together in ruins. Generation after generation passes

off the stage of mortal life, and the death-knell of the world will soon be sounded, when "this vast globe which we inhabit shall itself resolve, and, like the baseless fabric of a vision, leave not a wreck behind." Then, superiority of birth, honor and office, will be no more. Then, the gay attire will be exchanged for the winding-sheet, and the ancient mansion for the lonely grave. Ah! "The sum total of life forbids us to form remote expectations" in this world; for soon the pale mantle of death will cover us, and we shall be removed to the land of darkness, as darkness itself. Oh! let us not think all men mortal but ourselves. Let us, like the king of Macedon, cause it to be proclaimed daily in our ears, *Thou art mortal!* Let us, like Paul, *die daily*, and then, for us *to live, will be Christ, and to die, gain — unspeakable gain.* Let us secure salvation *now*, and our future will be happy. Death is not an "eternal sleep." "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." He. ix: 27.

Here is another scene, still more appalling than death — the last dreadful scene of nature :

" Amazing period ! when each mountain-height
 Out-burns Vesuvius : rocks eternal pour
 Their melted mass, as rivers once they pour'd ;
 Stars rush : and final ruin fiercely drives
 Her plough-share o'er creation ! While aloft,
 More than astonishment ! if more can be !

A Sun, O how unlike
 The Babe of Bethlehem ! How unlike the Man

That groan'd on Calvary ! Yet he it is :
That Man of Sorrows ! O, how changed ! What pomp !
In grandeur terrible, all heaven descends !
And gods ambitious triumph in his train."

He comes to judge the world. The inequality among men in this life, and justice, which is only partially exercised, require a future judgment. Crimes, known and unknown, do not here receive the penalty of the law. Criminals, by favor, or by flight, by force, or by bribery, escape justice with impunity. Hence, even the light of nature taught the heathen to believe that, when the souls of men left their bodies, they appeared before certain judges, who, after trial, assigned them to *the fields of bliss*, or to *the regions of woe*. But revelation clearly teaches that there will be a general judgment of all men, and of fallen angels, who are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Then it will be well with the righteous, and ill with the wicked, when every one shall receive according to the deeds done in the body. God "has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that Man whom he hath ordained ;" and "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." 2 Cor. v: 10. When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from

another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." Mt. xxv.

This great and final judgment is necessary to vindicate God's moral government, and show that he is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. The time of judgment is a secret which God, for wise reasons, has reserved to himself. "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels which are in Heaven." Mk. xiii: 32. It is called a day — the great day of the Lord — the last day — when

" Man, starting from his couch, shall sleep no more !
 The day is broke, which never more shall close !
 Above, around, beneath, amazement all !
 Terror and glory join'd in their extremes !
 Our God in grandeur, and our world on fire !
 All nature struggling in the pangs of death !
 Dost thou not hear her ? Dost thou not deplore
 Her strong convulsions, and her final groan ?
 Where are we now ? Ah me ! the ground is gone
 On which we stood. Lorenzo ! while thou mayest,
 Provide more firm support, or sink forever !
 Where ? how ? from whence ? Vain hope ! It is too late !
 Where, where, for shelter shall the guilty fly,
 When consternation turns the good man pale ?
 Great day ! for which all other days were made ;
 For which earth rose from chaos, man from earth ;
 And an eternity, the date of gods,
 Descended on poor earth-created man !
 Great day of dread, decision, and despair !
 At thought of thee, each subjunary wish
 Lets go its eager grasp, and drops the world,

And catches at each reed of hope in Heaven.

Thrice happy they ! that enter now the court

Heav'n opens in their bosoms."

This world is supposed to be the place of this solemn scene. The saints will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and the wicked will probably be left on the earth to be consumed with it. The Son of Man shall be revealed in his glory, and call upon the earth and the sea to give up their dead ; and all, from Adam to his latest posterity, shall obey the summons, and appear before the supreme and impartial Judge of all. "Those whom birth, and office, and wealth, and talents, placed at a distance from each other, will stand upon the same level : the greatest without their ensigns of dignity, and the poor without their marks of abasement ; for then only moral distinctions will be regarded. The oppressor and the oppressed will be there ; the one to obtain the redress of his wrongs, and the other to have his violence returned upon his own head. Statesmen, whose avarice or profusion impoverished nations, and whose intrigues involved them in wars ; princes, who imagined that mankind were made for them ; and blood-stained heroes, who acquired an illustrious name by desolating the earth, will stand before the tribunal, amidst the cries and execrations of millions whom they ruined with impunity. Jews and Gentiles, Mahometans and Christians, the learned and the unlearned, the

bond and the free, the high and the low, will appear, divested of all adventitious circumstances, to render an account to Him who is no respecter of persons, and whose omniscient eye will distinguish each individual in the immense throng as easily as if he were alone. Not one of the righteous shall be forgotten, and not one of the wicked shall find a hiding place from the justice of the Judge."

The Son of Man will be the judge, for "the Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son." He will appear in the glory of his Father, and with the holy angels. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." 2 Thes. i: 7-9. "The Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." 1 Thes. iv: 16. "The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Mt. xiii : 41-43. John says : "I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God : and the books were opened : and another book was opened, which is the book of life : and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and the grave delivered up the dead which were in them ; and they were judged, every man according to their works." Re. xx : 11-13. Paul declares, that "As many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law ; and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law." Jesus cannot err in judgment, and from his sentence there can be no appeal. To the righteous he will say : "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." They shall be ever with the Lord. To them he speaks no last words.

"Yet to the lost there are, indeed, last words
Of Christ. The lost will ever think on these,
And in the ages of eternity
Will sharpened recollection call them up—
Depart ye cursed ! What last words are these
To dwell upon forever ! To recall
The melting, melancholy tones of pity,
Mixed with severity of God, in which
The Son of Man pronounced eternal woe !"

Alas, what is man ! What scenes await him ! How solemn his final interview, in that great day, when all will be tried, all mysteries explained, and the whole system of this world shall be dissolved — when time shall be no more, and the heavens and the earth shall pass away with a great noise ! The curtain will be drawn, and the meek and lowly Jesus, persecuted on earth, nailed to the cross, and laid in the tomb, will be glorified on his great white throne, before which shall be assembled all nations ; and his love and mercy to sinners will be manifested with supreme and eternal splendor. He will come as a thief in the night, when all are buried in sleep, and in a moment burst asunder the astonished world — break up their slumbers — raise the dead, and bring them forth, “some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.” The sun shall become black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon and stars shall withdraw their shining. The heavens shall depart, and every mountain and island shall be removed out of their places. The righteous will be received up into glory, and the wicked, amid the final overthrow and agonies of the world, shall call on the mountains and the rocks to fall on them, and hide them from the presence of the Lamb, and from the glory of his majesty. The holy angels will send a shout of triumph through the world, and the saints will echo

back the sound, while Jesus will confess them before his Father, and before the angels.

Then, all human greatness shall end; and how different will appear the vain pursuits of this world! How will the wordling look on all his accumulations! How will the devotee of fashion regard his vanity—the votary of pleasure regard his scenes of mirth, and revelry, and sin! How will the disputer of this world, and the sinner of every kind, regard their conduct, for which they have bartered their eternal salvation!

O, what a mighty change will then take place in the views of men and things! Many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first. The man of genius, who has commanded the admiration of the world—the monarch, who has been idolized by his courtiers, or execrated by millions—the hero, who has been “a murderer above the laws, and greatly praised for doing murderous deeds”—the blood-thirsty persecutor, and all who have not obeyed the Gospel, shall descend from their elevation, be shut out of the kingdom of Heaven, and cast into outer darkness; while the humble believer in Jesus shall sit down with him on his throne. Dives will be tormented, and Lazarus comforted.

What a change will there be among many of those on the same level in this life—among neighbors, and acquaintances, and families! Husband and wife,

parent and child, brother and sister, minister and people, will, in many cases, be separated forever — the one exalted to heaven ; the other cast down to hell ! O, the thought of such a melancholy scene is sufficient to melt the hardest heart ! Is it not sufficient to *urge salvation* on sinners ? Believers shall be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, and shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, reflecting the beauty and glory of their Redeemer.

In view of these things, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness ; looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat ? Be diligent, that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless. How precious is the day of salvation ! Seize the present moment. Flee for your life, like Lot from the cities of the Plain. Look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the Plain ; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed. Keep this scene in view, and strive now to enter into the kingdom of Heaven. What emotions will the sinner then feel ! With what agonies will he sigh for another day of salvation ! But that day is then past, and Heaven's door is shut. No smiles of God are seen, and no voice of mercy is heard : but the wail of everlasting woe rings forever in his ears, through the dismal regions of darkness and despair.

Oh, God of our salvation ! through the exceeding riches of thy grace, displayed in the redemption of fallen man, save us from sin and woe, and openly acknowledge us as thine, in that great day when all will be judged in righteousness, and will receive their final doom ! Oh, hear us in mercy and in love !

SALVATION IS URGED FROM THE MISERY OF HELL. That misery is supreme and endless, as it appears even from the names applied to the place itself. It is called “a place of torment” — outer darkness — the bottomless pit — a furnace of fire — a lake that burns with fire and brimstone — fire prepared for the Devil and his angels — the undying worm, and fire that shall not be quenched — devouring fire — everlasting burnings. There, impenitent sinners, bound hand and foot, will gnaw their tongues for pain. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. There the rich man lifted up his eyes, being in torments. There the wicked shall be turned, with all the nations that forget God. There *peace bleeds and hope expires*. Oh, who would not shun the road which leads to that place of indescribable and inconceivable torment, darkness and despair !

“ A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,
As one great furnace flamed, yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible
Served only to discover sights of woe.
Regions of sorrow ! doleful shades ! where peace

And rest can never dwell, but torture without end
 Still reigns, and a fiery deluge fed
 With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed.”

There, misery shall never end; for “the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever.” It is admitted that the word *forever* has sometimes a limited signification; but it must also be admitted that it signifies eternal duration; and hence its meaning is determined by the object to which it is applied. When applied to servitude among the Jews, it signified, during life-time, or to the year of Jubilee. When applied to a divine ordinance, it signified, during the Old Dispensation. When applied to the everlasting hills, it signifies only to the end of the world. But when applied to the perfections of God, to his government, his glory and praise, it signifies *absolute eternity*. When applied to the happiness of the righteous, and the misery of the wicked, it has the same signification; hence it inevitably follows, that if the happiness of the one is eternal, the misery of the other is also eternal. Thus, the same word is used in the original, when it is said, “These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.” Mt. xxv : 46.

The eternity of punishment increases the pain of the bottomless pit beyond all thought of men and angels. There hope dies, and despair reigns without control and without end. How awful, how inconceiv-

ably great is the misery which is inflicted by a God of consuming fire, on the finally impenitent! How dreadful to dwell with *devouring fire*—with *everlasting burnings*! O, what misery it is to be dying perpetually, yet never dead—dying from day to day—from year to year—from age to age without end! This is to suffer the wrath of God, before whom all the nations of the earth are as nothing—who looks on the earth, and it trembles—who touches the hills, and they smoke—who has all means and all power to “make every faculty and every pore the avenue of pain and sorrow”—who says, “A fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn to the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and shall set on fire the foundations of the mountains.” De. xxxii: 22. “Tophet is ordained of old, yea, for the king it is prepared: he has made it deep and large; the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.”

Is. xxx: 33.

Their misery will also proceed from themselves and from their associates. Hell is *fire prepared for the Devil and his angels*, and for all the nations that forget God. Their own evil natures will grow worse and worse. Their evil passions will increase in strength, and will rage without control and without gratification. Without accomplishing anything against God and his people, rage will do its utmost. Hatred,

envy and malice will rankle in their bosoms against one another, and will end only in disappointment, bitterness and woe. Sin will appear in its true character, as opposed to God, and deserving his wrath and curse. The mask will be drawn, and their own character will appear base and loathsome, and fill their hearts with the utmost sorrow. Divine restraint, which has prevented much sin and misery in this life, will be thrown off, and wickedness will do its utmost. Contempt, hatred and revenge will eternally pursue their enemy to the last extremity. There will be no natural affection; no amiableness of disposition; no sincerity of heart; no confidence; no sympathy: but all evil passions will reign, and constitute one of the bitterest ingredients in the cup of future woe. Here, the worst individual has some friend to sympathize, and pity him, and relieve his sorrows; but there, will be no object of affection on which the lost can rest, through all eternity; no parent, brother, sister, lover, or friend, to whom he can pour out his complaint, and find relief from the bitterness of woe. There, he has no God, no Saviour, no hope. There, he is alone in his dreary dungeon, neglected, abhorred and persecuted. "Not a sigh can he breathe; not a tear can he shed; not a sorrow can he unfold; not a prayer can he utter, with a hope of being befriended, heard, or regarded." Through eternity there will be no change for the better. "All around him will be gloom

and solitude; all before him will be desolation, anguish and despair."

His misery will also be aggravated by a sense of his utter loss, while "fast bound in chains of darkness evermore, and second death, and the undying worm." "His folly and his guilt in violating the divine law, and rejecting the divine mercy—in dishonoring God, disbelieving the Redeemer, and resisting the Holy Spirit—in contemning the means of grace, and disregarding the warnings of Providence, will, in a particular manner, prey upon his heart, and exhibit him to himself as weak and wicked beyond expression. All his sinful conduct, he will loathe as base and abominable. But his abuses of the Divine character; his ungrateful and injurious treatment of the Saviour, and of the mercy of God manifested in the work of redemption, will overwhelm him with self-condemnation, and pierce his soul with anguish and self-reproach."

Alas, how great is the evil of sin! It has cast the angels down from the throne of God into eternal perdition—driven man from the garden of Eden into a world of sin and sorrow—nailed the Saviour of sinners to the cross—laden every breeze with sighs—wrung every heart with anguish—made every shroud, dug every grave, and turned the world into a scene of desolation and woe. How great will its ravages be, in the regions of horror and despair! O, who would not avoid this evil—who would not flee from

the wrath to come, and lay hold on eternal life ! What Christian will not be more ardent in devotion, and active and exemplary in his life ? In view of these things, what sinner will not be aroused from his stupor to secure salvation *now* ? Who is not overwhelmed with amazement at the thought of dwelling forever with the Devil and his angels, in a *lake of fire and brimstone* ; and yet alone, in the midst of millions, *without a friend, without a God, without comfort, and without hope !* How terrible even to behold ! Far from the bounds of light, and life, and love — far from the glorious mount of God —

Dire sights I saw — dire sounds
 I heard ; and suddenly before my eye
 A wall of fiery adamant sprung up —
 Wall mountainous, tremendous, flaming high
 Above all flight of hope. I paused and looked :
 And saw, where'er I looked upon that mound,
 Sad figures traced in fire — not motionless —
 But imitating life —
 And worn and wasted with enormous woe.”
 They “ writhed convulsed, and uttered mimic groans ;
 And tried, and wished, and ever tried, and wished
 To die ; but could not die ! Oh, horrid sight !
 This is eternal death.
 Wide was the place,
 And deep as wide, and ruinous as deep.
 Beneath, I saw a lake of burning fire,
 With tempest tossed perpetually, and still
 The waves of fiery darkness 'gainst the rocks

Of dark damnation broke, and music made
Of melancholy sort.
Thro' all that dungeon of unfading fire,
I saw most miserable beings walk,
Burning continually, yet unconsumed ;
Forever wasting, yet enduring still ;
Dying perpetually, yet never dead.
Some wandered lonely in the desert flames,
And some in fell encounter fiercely met,
With curses loud, and blasphemies that made
The cheeks of darkness pale ; and as they fought,
And cursed, and gnashed their teeth, and wished to die,
Their hollow eyes did utter streams of woe.
And there were groans that ended not, and sighs
That always sighed, and tears that ever wept,
And ever fell, but not in Mercy's sight ;
And sorrow, and repentance, and despair,
Among them walked, and to their thirsty lips
Presented frequent cups of burning gall.
And as I listened, I heard these beings curse
Almighty God, and curse the Lamb, and curse
The earth, the Resurrection morn, and seek,
And ever vainly seek, for utter death."

SALVATION IS URGED FROM THE HAPPINESS OF HEAVEN.
True happiness does not grow in nature's cold and
barren soil. It is found only in Heaven, the perfec-
tion of beauty, and glory, and bliss without end.

" Heaven 's the perfection of all that can
Be said or thought — riches, delight, or harmony,
Health, beauty ; and all these not subject to
The waste of time, but in their height eternal."

It is called the "Holy city — New Jerusalem, coming down from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." It is God's habitation, adorned with all the beauty, variety and splendor which become his Divine character. All that is magnificent and glorious in creation, and all that has been sung in the poetry of every age, can give only a faint idea of the glory and blessedness of that holy place. Its foundations are garnished with all manner of precious stones; its wall is of jasper; its gates are pearls; its streets pure gold. In its midst stands the throne of God and of the Lamb, and from that throne flows the river of Water of Life. On its banks stands the Tree of Life, bearing the various fruits of immortality, and the fragrance of the Holy Spirit is wafted on every breeze. It is enlightened by the glory of God and of the Lamb, casting supreme splendor over the whole scene. There, everything vile and sinful is forever excluded by that power which rules over all. "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they who are written in the Lamb's book of life." Nothing shall ever draw one darkening shadow over the brow of those who shall be counted worthy of that bright abode. No cloud shall obscure the beams of its glory. No storm shall spread its ravages, or mar its peace and harmony. No night is there — no sin, or sorrow, or pain, or disease, or death — no

anxiety, fear, regret, envy, or jealousy — no thought of time's swift wing, or closing night, or parting tear. Every tear is dried up. Destruction has a perpetual end. The last trumpet of war has sounded, and the last shout of battle has expired. Death himself is dead, and universal peace, divine and eternal, breathes her balmy influence through the immense and eternal kingdom of God. "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." But no pen can describe, no mind conceive, the supreme splendor and happiness of Heaven.

"Look up, my soul, toward the eternal hills;
Those heavens are fairer than they seem;
There pleasures, all sincere, glide in its crystal rills;
There not a dreg of guilt defiles,
Nor guilt disturbs the stream;
There is no cursed soil, no tainted spring,
No roses grow on thorns, nor honey wears a sting."

This is the city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God; where everything will bloom in beauty, and all good will be eternally enjoyed. There, in his Father's house, are the mansions which Jesus has prepared for his people. There, through all the toils and conflicts of the way, they arrive in safety, receive their crowns of life, and reign forever with Jesus on his throne. "Ye are come unto Mount Zion and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly

Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant." Angels, who announced the Saviour's birth in the chorus, "Glory to God in the highest," and who minister to the heirs of salvation, are their companions, their fellow servants, and of their brethren. God is not ashamed to be called their God, for "the Lord God shall dwell among them, and be their God, and they shall be his people." Jesus is not ashamed to call them brethren, whom he has renewed by his Spirit, redeemed by his blood, and brought home to glory. He beholds them as the trophies of his Cross, and they see him no more through a glass darkly, but face to face, and wave their palms of triumph in honor of redeeming love. The days of their mourning are ended. Their everlasting song of joy and triumph has begun. The rags of mortality are exchanged for robes of glory—the humble cottage for mansions of perfect bliss. The wailings of earth are turned into songs of endless praise to Him who loved them, and washed them from their sins in his own blood, and hath made them kings and priests unto God. "The ransomed of the Lord shall come to Zion with songs: everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall

obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

After this I looked and behold a door was opened in Heaven, and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald, and round about the throne were four and twenty seats, and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment, and they had on their heads crowns of gold. They worshipped Him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power—worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.*

Such is the melody of Heaven, where all the honor of redemption is ascribed to God and to the Lamb, and all the air is love. There, is friendship without disguise or pretence; there, love to God and man, as he passes down the tranquil stream of ages, glows in every heart, and inspires their triumphant song of deliverance; there, they ever praise God, and study his character and stupendous works. Active and unwearied in their pursuits, they will continually make new discoveries of divine perfection and excellence; mysteries will be explained and difficulties solved. All that is magnificent and glorious in creation will be discovered—the dispensations of Providence in the history of the Church, and of the world, will be

explained, and the great mystery of godliness in the redemption of fallen man will be unfolding through all eternity. It will be seen that nothing in creation was defective and nothing superfluous ; but that God has done all things well, with supreme wisdom and goodness. Jesus, who is the light of the world, and the light and glory of Heaven, *the centre eminent, to which every eye is turned*, will lead them to fountains of infinite wisdom, and as their divine Instructor, will unfold to them the perfections of beauty, and glory, and redemption. The field is immense, including events, and operations, and mysteries without number and without end. God, who is the sum of all excellence, can never be found out unto perfection. This is what makes the song of Heaven ever new.

All this glory and blessedness will continue without interruption and without end. The very thought of its termination, even in the most distant view of ages, would render the happiness of Heaven imperfect. But no such melancholly thought can ever arise in the tranquil minds of the blessed. *Heaven is the perfection of all that can be said or thought, and in their height eternal*. It is a city that hath foundations which were laid for eternity. Jesus has prepared it for his people, whom he addresses in this endearing language, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Was ever language so full of love

and joy? *Come, ye blessed, inherit the kingdom—enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* It dries up every tear; destroys all sorrow, and bids a countless number of ransomed sinners to enter into rest, in God's presence, where is fulness of joy, and where are pleasures forevermore. "The perpetuity of bliss is bliss." The righteous shall enter into life eternal. "God shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself, for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." Is. lx: 19, 20.

After all that can be said or thought, "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." How passing great, beyond the utmost stretch of thought and conception is the goodness of God to fallen man! How infinitely great is the bliss which Jesus has obtained for us! Oh, how lovely, and how precious is he to my soul!

" Jesus, my all,

My theme, my inspiration, and my crown;
My strength in age, my rise in low estate,
My soul's ambition, pleasure, wealth — my world;
My light in darkness, and my life in death;
My boast through time, bliss through eternity:
Eternity — too short to speak thy praise,
Or fathom thy profound of love to man."

Oh ! will not that bliss *urge* and *inspire* us with the most ardent desire and unwearied pursuit for the salvation of our souls ? Here are the best blessings in the gift of God — blessings of immense value — blessings without number and without end — blessings given to sinners who had forfeited all good, incurred all evil, and were destined to drink the cup of endless woe. These blessings we do not merit, but owe them to the love of God, and the obedience of his Son. The happiness of Heaven is a reward, not of debt, but of grace, and fills our souls with the most ardent love and with heart-felt gratitude to Him through whom we obtain that happiness. Oh, how inspiring is the promise, “To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me on my throne” — “He that overcometh, shall inherit all things !” He shall sit down with Christ on his throne, and reign with him evermore in Heaven, where everything will refine and flourish with increasing beauty, grandeur and sublimity.

Nothing is wanting to make the happiness of Heaven supreme and eternal. Its supreme splendor — its holy society — their splendid crowns, and shining robes, and meet pursuits, and unmingled enjoyments, and their eternal duration, will fill every heart with joy unspeakable, and Heaven with the sweetest song of redeeming love. The anticipation of this, inspired the song of the prophets and poets, and the heavenly host who announced the advent of the Messiah in the

chorus, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." It now inspires our song ; and "after it shall have been sung in the poetry of every human tongue, and filled the world with the voice of its melody, it shall, at last, gather together around the throne on high, all its earlier and later bards for the grand concert of eternity ; and there, upon the bright plains of glory, in an amphitheatre which shall sweep the circuit of the all-surrounding skies, and rear its dome amid the echoing arches of the everlasting firmament — there, the innumerable company of the redeemed from earth shall tune their golden lyres, and the thousands, and thousands, and ten times thousands of angels, cherubim and seraphim shall bring their harps, and with their immortal tongues shall sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, whilst God himself shall hear and approve the praise. Then shall the redeemed of Adam's race lift up their loudest and sweetest song — even the new song of redemption."

"Sitting near the Tree of Life,
In robes of linen flowing white and clean,
Of holiest aspect, of divinest soul,
Angels and men — into the glory look
Of redeeming love, and turn the leaves
Of man's redemption o'er ; the secret leaves
Which none on earth were found worthy to open ;
And as they read the mysteries divine,
The endless mysteries of salvation wrought

By God's incarnate Son, they humbler bow
Before the Lamb, and glow with warmer love.
But whatsoe'er those spirits blest pursue,
Where'er they go, whatever sights they see
Of glory and bliss through all the tracts of heaven,
The centre still, the figure eminent,
Whither they ever turn, on whom all eyes
Repose with infinite delight — is God,
And his incarnate Son, the Lamb once slain
On Calvary to ransom ruined man.

None idle here ; look where thou wilt, they all
Are active, all engaged in meet pursuit ;
Not happy else. Hence it is that the song
Of Heaven is ever new ; for daily thus
And nightly, new discoveries are made
Of God's unbounded wisdom, power and love,
Which give the understanding larger room,
And swell the hymn with evergrowing praise.
Thy works all praise thee ; all thy angels praise ;
Thy saints adore, and on thy altars burn
The fragrant incense of perpetual love.
They praise thee now : their hearts, their voices praise,
And swell the rapture of the glorious song.

Harp ! lift thy voice on high ; shout, angels, shout !
And loudest, ye redeemed ! glory to *God*,
And to the *Lamb* who bought us with his blood :
From every kindred, nation, people, tongue ;
And washed, and sanctified, and saved our souls,
And gave us robes of linen pure, and crowns
Of life, and made us kings and priests to God.
Shout back to ancient time ! sing aloud and wave
Your palms of triumph ! Sing —
Glory to God, and to the Lamb, Amen ;

Forever and forevermore, Amen.

Thousands of thousands — thousands infinite —

With voice of boundless love, answered : Amen.

And through eternity, near and remote

The worlds adoring, echoed back : Amen.

And God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost —

The One Eternal ! smiled superior bliss,

And every eye, and every face in Heaven,

Reflecting, and reflected, beamed with love.

Meantime the landscape glowed with holy joy.”

Oh, the inexpressible joy—oh, the supreme and eternal bliss of Heaven ! Farewell earthly crowns, and kingdoms and glory ; ye effulgent orbs of heaven, farewell. The joys and treasures of an hour I cheerfully resign for Jesus and his salvation. Oh, my Saviour, approve and ratify this deed ; make me a trophy of thy grace and power to save to the uttermost ; give me a taste of love divine, that I may know thy people’s joy and unite in their triumphant song of deliverance ; enable me to believe on thee unto life everlasting ; to live by faith in thee, and to speak the honors of thy name, till my last labouring breath. Then, beyond death’s dark vale, in a nobler, sweeter song, I’ll sing thy praise, with all the triumphant hosts of Heaven. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer. Bring them home to every heart in power and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. Teach us more and more by

thy word and Spirit the new song of redemption, and tune our hearts to sing it with thy approbation in the Church below. Then, when passed over Jordan, we shall sing it with the choirs above, on the banks of the pure river of Water of Life in the midst of the Paradise of God. Then, in sweeter and nobler strains, we shall sing it with that unnumbered multitude which will stand before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, and will cry with a loud voice, saying, SALVATION TO OUR GOD, WHO SITTETH UPON THE THRONE, AND UNTO THE LAMB. *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.* Then all the redeemed, assembled around the throne on high, shall strike their golden harps and sing this Song with everlasting joy and triumph. The angels will shout, saying, Amen, Alleluia, glory to God and to the Lamb. God will be all and in all, and every eye and every face in Heaven shall beam with love. Then, as each revolving year, and day, and moment flies away, awake, O my soul, stretch every nerve, and press on with vigor to this higher, nobler, sweeter Song, when time shall be no more. Awake, ye sinners—

“Awake, ye saints, and raise your eyes,
And raise your voices high;
Awake, and praise that sovereign love
That shows salvation nigh.

On all the wings of time it flies,
Each moment brings it near ;
Then welcome each declining day !
Welcome each closing year !

Not many years their rounds shall run,
Nor many mornings rise,
Ere all its glories stand revealed
To our admiring eyes.

Ye wheels of Nature, speed your course ;
Ye mortal powers, decay ;
Fast as ye bring the night of death,
Ye bring eternal day."

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